



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

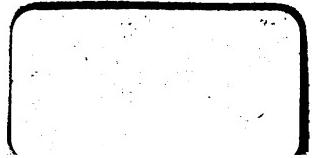
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

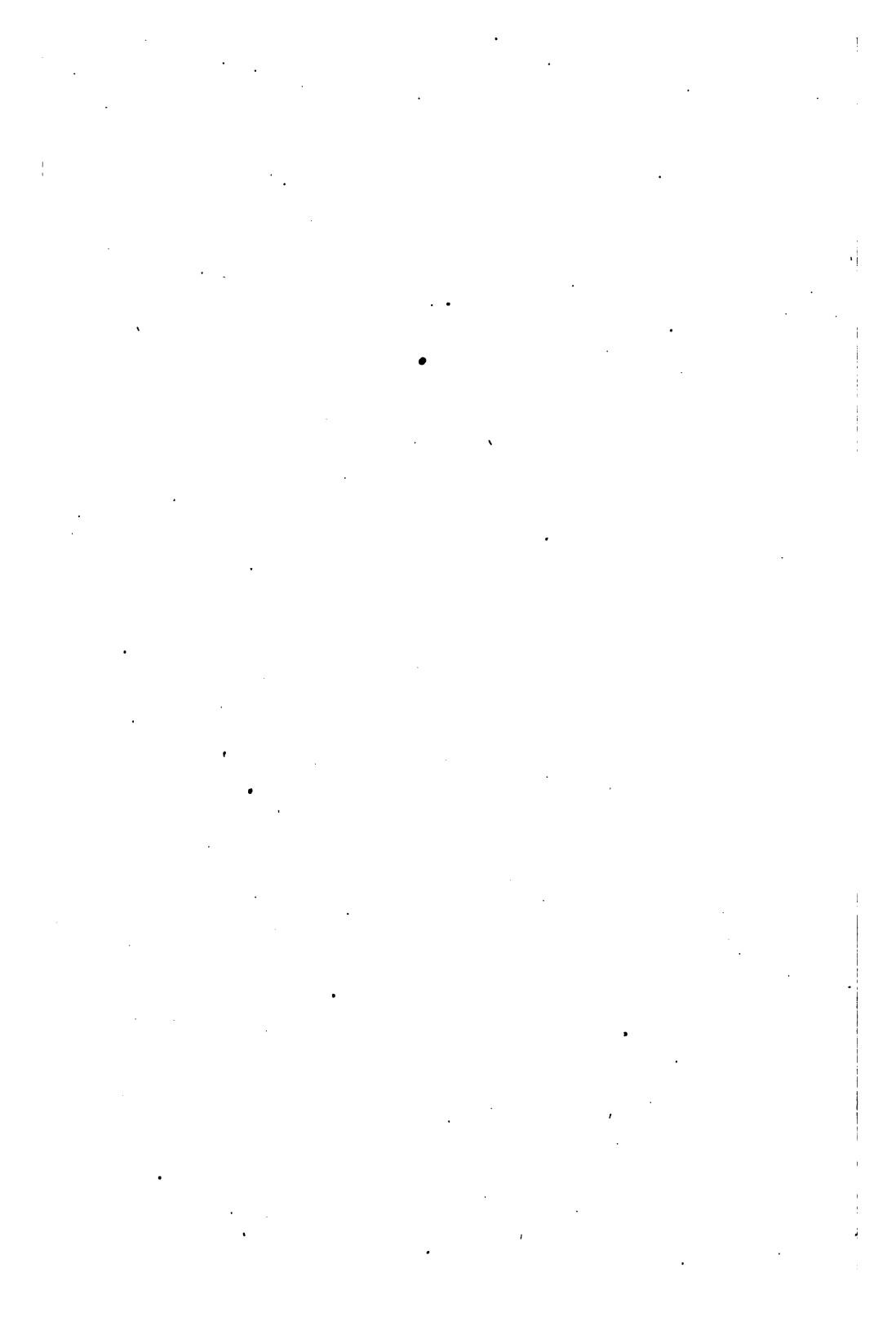
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

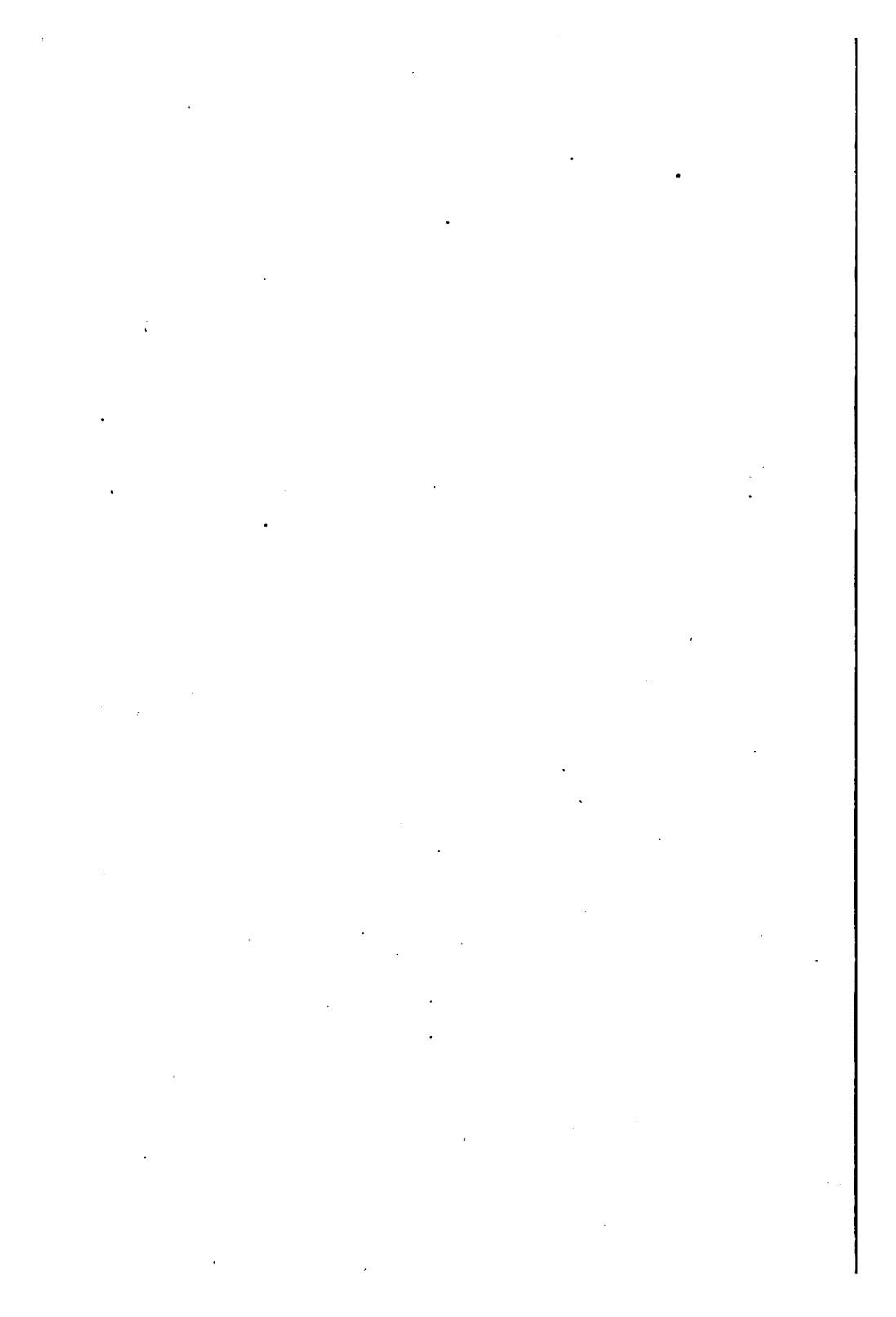


NBI

Moore, E.







Delilah:

A TALE OF OLDEN TIMES,

and

Miscellaneous Verses.

BY

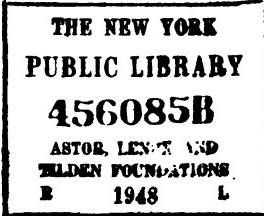
EUGENE MOORE.
I

2

WASHINGTON, D. C.

1889.

M.W.

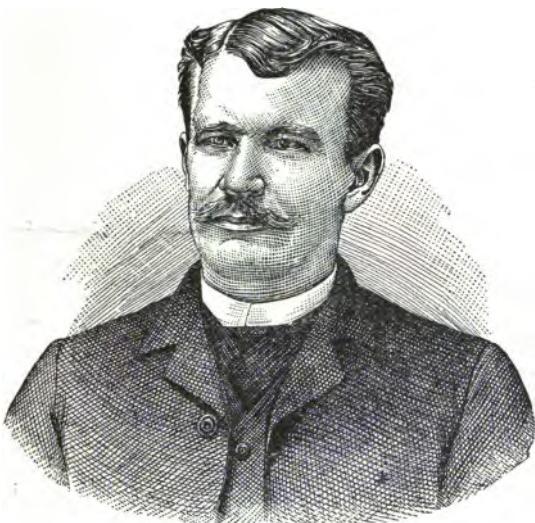


Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1888, by

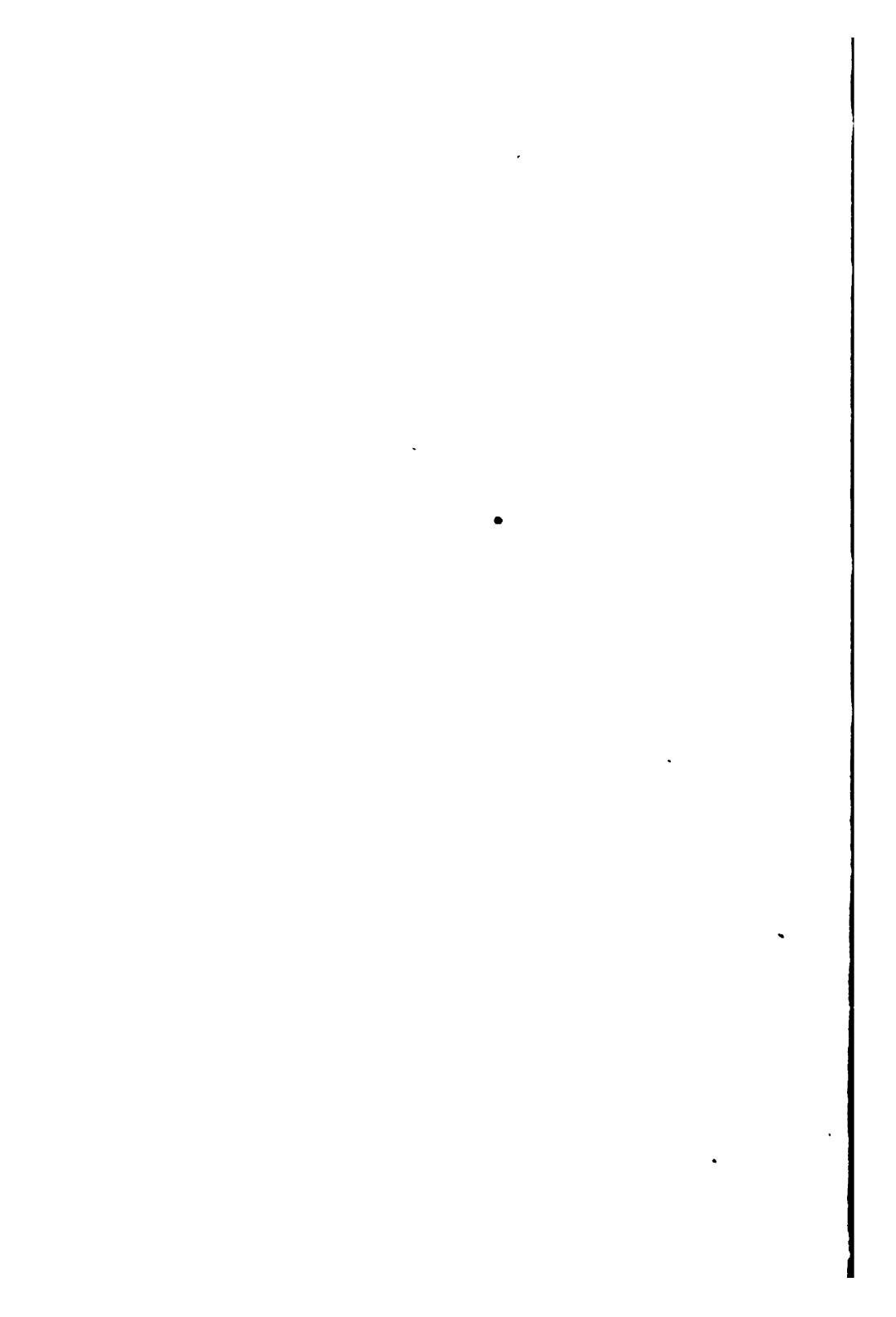
EUGENE MOORE,

In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.

All rights reserved.



Yours sincerely
Eugene Moore



CONTENTS.

DELILAH: A TALE OF OLDEN TIMES.

	PAGE.
PART I—A Garden Fair.....	7
PART II—The Gods Defied.....	17
PART III—Gold Tempteth Not.....	31
PART IV—My Love Hath Come.....	41
PART V—A Cup of Wine.....	49
PART VI—The Secret Told.....	60
PART VII—Where Many Part.....	78
PART VIII—His Love Was Weak.....	87
PART IX—God's Hand Revealed.....	93
PART X—Here Endeth All.....	107

MISCELLANEOUS VERSES.

	PAGE.
CIRCE	113
TWO WOMEN	116
HAUNTED.....	120
FATE	123
SHE IS DEAD.....	125
A DREAM.....	127
MERLIN TO VIVIEN.....	130

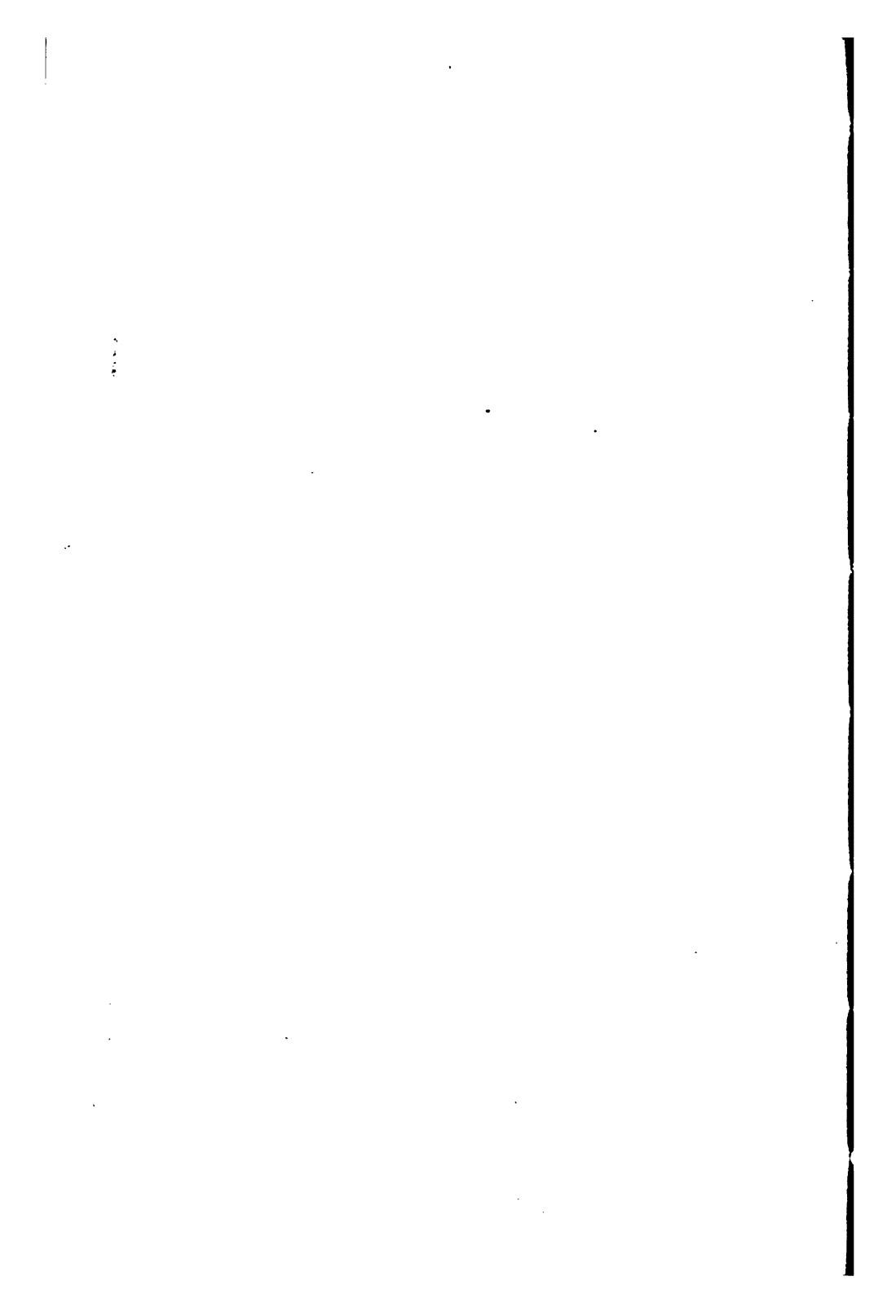
	PAGE.
WHEN ROSES BLOOM	135
NEVERMORE.....	136
SUNSET NEAR WASHINGTON	137
ISLE OF REST.....	138
THE WEAVER.....	139
OMAR KHAYYAM'S WISH	140
IRENE.....	141
NOT FORGOTTEN.....	144
NOCTURNES.....	145
WHERE SHADOWS FALL.....	147
MY SHATTERED VASE.....	147
FOUR PICTURES.....	149
A STROLL.....	151
DURANTE VITA.....	152
MY BIRTHDAY.....	153
"FAR COUNTRY".....	153
IN THE CORNER.....	154
LENA LORD.....	155
ROSES	156
ACROSS THE WAY.....	157
CHRISTMAS MORN	158
To NELLIE.....	160
To ANNETTE.....	161
To MRS. NARCISSA G.....	162
SMOKING.....	163
AT THE WINDOW.....	164
A LETTER.....	165
A LETTER	168
A LETTER	170
ADRIFT.....	173
RONDEL.....	174

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED,
WITH REVERENCE AND RESPECT, TO MY FRIEND,
W. W. GODDING, M.D.,
WHOSE NOBLE LIFE IS DEVOTED TO THE
AMELIORATION OF THE SUFFERING AND BRIGHTENING
THE EXISTENCE OF THAT MOST UNFORTUNATE
CLASS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY,
THE INSANE.

J Q V H

Delilah:

A TALE OF OLDEN TIMES.



PART I.

A GARDEN FAIR.

Delilah.

Oh! night, beautiful night, I long, I long for thee;
I'm weary of the day, so weary of the day.
Oh! night, beautiful night, you bring my Love to me,
But ah, the garish day, my Love doth keep away—
My Love doth keep away.

Zora, thy psalt'ry string; sing me a song,
Such as we used to sing in days of yore,
When girls we roamed in Sorek's flow'ry vale.
Ah, girlhood days, the brightest of all days,
Ere love hath come with all its joys and pains;
Ere unto Ashtoreth we offer up
Our pure young hearts and fruitful maidenhood.
I should be happy now, since I have won
The love of him, the Hebrew Nazarite,
Before whose glance the haughty men of war,
Philistia's host, in terror flee away.
Samson, he's called, "The little sun"—to me
Far brighter sun than he who slideth down
Yon blue hillside of space. He comes to night,
My sun, my sun, who shineth but for me,
And maketh darkest night like brightest day;
But when the day doth take him from my side
My sun is hid, and all is dark again.
Yes, yes, I should be happy now, and yet
Am not. Ah, Zora, say, why is it so?

Zora.

Because you love.

Delilah.

Because I love? Doth love
 Beget these gloomy fears? I once did think
 That Love was sire to Mirth and Joy, but thou
 Dost teach me lessons new.

Zora.

No love can be
 Where fear is not. In form intangible
 The doubt creeps in, but when once entered, then
 The reason why, we find too soon. As men
 Look not in caverns for a star, but in the sky,
 So we who make a star of each loved thing
 Up in the skies enraptured ever gaze;
 And oft, alas, high up the azure vault,
 We see what seems a dove, which still descends,
 And changing form, becomes at last a cloud—
 A cloud which larger grown obscures the sun.
 And thus it is with thee: thy sun of love,
 Who shines for thee to-day, hath also shone
 On women oft before. This is the cloud
 Which now descends, and makes eclipse
 Of all the light. The night will come, the cloud
 On Love's soft breath will float away, and thou
 The darkness wilt forget, but it will come
 Again when next you read the stars of love.

Delilah.

Oh! think me not so light; I do not drift
 Hither and yon, like fallen leaf, before
 Each passing wind. Ah, no; love makes me glad,
 And I to win this king of men am proud;

For well I know he loves, yes, loveth me.
 What woman yet e'er failed to know the heart
 That beat responsive to her own? The strings
 Are so attuned when love doth touch the chords
 Of one, the other vibrates too. 'Tis thus
 I know this man is mine, mine till life's end.
 This sadness which I feel is new to me,
 And seems to shadow forth grief deeper still;
 I fear for him, he who hath ever been
 Unconquered, yet may fall in treach'ry's snare.

Zora.

Hast thou not often strove to win from him
 The secret of his strength; and strove in vain?

Delilah.

That I his secret to unfold did strive
 Is true. Had success with design kept pace,
 Unto the princess, and the priests, I then
 Had for their gold and the attendant fame
 Delivered Samson up. A vow I made
 That I this deed would do, because that men
 Did fear him so, and like the leopard dam
 I thirsted for the blood of man. I knew
 Great wealth was mine if I could bring him down;
 Delilah's name all lands should know, and hold
 Far higher than all other names. I prayed
 Unto the gods to bring him to my side;
 And when one day he came where I did sit,
 So free from guile I seemed, so cunning wrought,
 By me he could not pass. Like many men,
 Lords and princess high, into my net he fell.
 With all my dark intent securely hid,
 I set to work, but he suspicious was.
 Time and time me lies he told. I listened,

And with swift and sure attempt I followed—
 Attempts which vain did prove. He was too wise.
 Then came with silent step this love unknown
 Before ; and when I waked I found his life
 With mine so intertwined the two were one ;
 And then remembrance came of that deep wrong
 Which I had sought to do. This fills my days
 With gloomy fears prophetic of a time
 When I my love shall lose, and so my life.

Zora.

Who yieldeth not to love's soft blandishments,
 On sterner things will look with wider eyes.
Fear not for him, my friend, but for thyself.
 We who have stood in the doorway of the house,
 And bade the passing stranger enter in,
 Should know no love, but ever train our hearts
 To beat unquicken'd by any man's low voice.
 I've watched thee since first came this Nazarite,
 And saw with dread the swift growth of thy love,
 And marked the change that this thy love hath wrought.
 Before a king in Sorek thou didst dance ;
 And when he swore thou wert the fairest maid
 In all the land, and said he fain would have
 Thee by his side, and bade them seat thee there—
 When thou wert come, he asked thee for a kiss !
 Then thou didst cast thy tabret at his feet,
 And turned from him in scorn. She who refused
 To kiss a king, so lowly now hath grown
 That she, with bended head, doth kneel before
 A cursed Nazarite—Philistia's foe—
 And one who scorns at all her mighty gods.
 Ah, me, I wish this love had never come ;
 I know 'twill work thee ill ; this man I know

New loves will seek ; he's fickle, fond of change ;
 But thou, like all thy kind, can't love but once.
 And losing this thy first and only love,
 Thou wilt fade, and fall from the stem of life,
 As falls the olive fruit when it is kissed
 By fierce Euroclydon. Delilah, we
 Have walked together many happy days ;
 Together we have plucked life's sweetest fruits ;
 Together many days the city's streets
 We've strolled, seeking the harlot's wage to earn ;
 And I do love thee with a sister's love.
 I pray thee while the time doth yet allow,
 Beat down this love ; grow rich ; he gives thee much ;
 And when the time doth come, for come it must,
 When he hath tired grown ; when beauty's gone,
 When Age hath thrown his dust into thine eyes,
 Then we can seek our valley home once more,
 To pass away uncursed with vain regrets.

Delilah.

I thank thee, Zora, for thy love ; not oft
 Such great solicitude doth woman show
 Unto her sister woman ; and I feel
 For that our lives so little joy have known
 Since those bright days we gathered olives
 By the Great Sea's shore, singing the old songs
 Philistia's daughters sing, we two are friends.
 Adversity, which often separates
 The lives of those who walk the common path,
 Doth serve to weld together lives like ours.
 The smiles of fortune which allure and chain
 The fawning seekers after unearned fruits
 Doth drive us far apart. We cannot bear
 High fortunes for our friends, but jealous grow,

And fain would to our level draw them back.
 I blame thee not for that thou bidst me cast
 This sweet love from my life. Thine eyes are blind
 By my too bright estate; but for the sake
 Of thy true love, and for the days of yore,
 'Tis easy to forgive; yet strive no more
 Suspicion dark to breed within my mind;
 Nor bid me make of love foul merchandise.
 That time hath passed. He from his wealth doth give
 What here I have. Yon house is his, and all
 Therein; but if he came to me outcast,
 Friendless, poor, I'd love him still. All the gold
 From Ophir's streams would make me poor indeed
 If that would be the price of his lost love.
 We hither came to pass the midday heat;
 Eastward yon palm tree casts its shadows now;
 Thy psalt'ry still unstrung doth lie, and we,
 Conversing thus, time's flight have ceased to mark.
 This day seems big with things that are to come;
 And I am glad that thou art here; I need
 Some sweet companionship like thine to-day;
 My heart seems weighted, clogged, and scarcely moves.
 Ah, grief and I have long familiar been;
 I recognize her shadow on my soul.
 Pluck fruit, and bring some sweet pomegranate wine;
 We'll eat and drink; and when the night doth come,
 And brings my King, we'll seat him on a throne;
 With bells and tabrets we will dance and sing;
 We'll spread a feast, and make much mirth. To-night
 Shall be the crowning night of Love. To-day
 I've been so sad; to-night shall make amend.

Zora.

With us 'tis ever thus; our grief doth plunge
 Us Hinnom low, and then comes joy to hurl

As Jebal Jurmak high. The valley land
 Is all too tame. The vine and fig-tree suits
 Us not. All children pet the docile lamb ;
 The lion whelp alone is fit for us.
 And when the lion's teeth and claws have grown,
 They turn and rend us. We love them better then ,
 For love without love's pain would be no love.

Delilah.

Ah, Zora, the pains of love we women know
 The strong links are which bind us unto man.
 So warn no more of what my soul doth teach,
 But give advice of that which I know naught.

Zora.

I will not warn thee more, but well I know
 The gods love not to lose a worshiper ;
 And since thou'rt learned to love this Nazarite,
 To Dagon's shrine thou goest now no more.
 I've heard his priests now look with angry eyes
 Upon thee when thou passest by, and oft
 They murmur low, and say, " She serveth now
 " El Shaddai, the same god whom Samson serves."
 I say to thee, beware of Dagon's priests ;
 For when priests think their gods contempt receive,
 They angry grow, for off'rings they may lose.
 They hatch some thing of evil him to do
 Who chooseth his own god through light within.
 These priests their gods will make and set them up,
 And bid us come and offer at their shrines.
 And if we doubt, they say, " The gods destroy
 " The doubters, and forever cast them down."
 But I have found that priests, not gods, destroy.
 Not woman-like I know doth sound my words.
 We who in public places often sit

With many passers-by strange converse hold.
 And men who come in ships from Tarshish far,
With ivory and peacocks, apes and gold,
 Have told me of the gods of other lands.
 And many say Ashtoreth, who is known
 In other lands, but known by other names,
 Alone is worthy to be held divine.
 I cannot tell if this be so or not ;
 But if 'tis true, Ashtoreth smiles on thee.
 And I am glad, not jealous, as thou didst think,
 That thou the smiles of gods canst easy win ;
 But I some other course must still pursue
 The fav'ring smile of any god to claim.
 My knees are stiff, and do not easy bend,
 And I have learned too much of life's great pain
 To care to win the love of gods or men.
 But still for thee I keep a tender place,
 And fain would see thee happy once again.

Delilah.

Forgive me if I seemed to doubt thy truth ;
 The chords of love are all too quickly jarred ;
 Naught know I of these stories thou dost tell—
 Of jealous gods, and yet more jealous priests ;
 And what I think I will not idly speak.
 I know by hands of men some gods are made ;
 Of these no fear have I ; but of the priests,
 Thro' the unthinking faith of men grown strong,
 I'll watchful be. Still I do think the God
 Of Samson, He whom men El Shaddai call,
 Is not like other gods. We never see
 His awful form in brazen mouldings cast ;
 And the people who up to Canaan came
 From the black land brought many strange reports

Of what this God had wrought for them while yet
 They wandered in the wilderness. I've heard
 These stories oft, and I believe the God
 Who wrought these things is greater than that God
 Who in the temple sits in Azzah there.
 And often Samson says the mighty deeds
 Which he hath done were by his God performed.
 We'll talk no more; the shadows long have grown;
 The day draws to its close; we'll go within.
 Thy psalt'ry take, and sing me one sweet song;
 Then I will go make ready for my love.
 To me he cometh as a king—king-like;
 And queen-like I must robe me him to meet.
 Eve's early hours thou'l pass my friend with us;
 For though so great, my love is mirthful too.
 He'll love my friend because she is my friend.

Zora.

I'll sing a song I learned long years ago;
 'Tis sad, but fitting for the time and place.

SONG.

In yonder land whence Day doth come
 Doth lie a garden fair;
 'Tis said two Spirits once did roam
 That garden free from care.
 One plucked a flow'r rare and sweet,
 And laid it at the other's feet.
 She raised it, and their eyes did meet;
 Another Spirit then was there.

'Twas thus, 'tis said, that Love was born;
 Upon that flow'r there grew a thorn;
 It pierced her hand; she saw the stain;
 Thus Love was born, and born in pain.

And after in that garden fair
 Were many changes wrought;
 Two other Spirits wandered there,
 Whom Love had with him brought.
 One Spirit's name was Jealousy,
 And Falsehood was the other She;
 With Love they made the mystic three;
 Another Spirit soon them sought.

These three such angry discord made,
 The gods did speak; and thus they said:
 "Love is too weak," then blew a breath;
 The Conq'ror came; men called him Death.

Delilah.

I think that story I have heard before,
 But not so sweetly told as in thy song;
 I like it well; it promiseth that Death
 Will come to succor Love when in distress.
 I thank thee for the song; its meaning deep
 I'll keep within my mind; and when the time
 Doth come that Love and I fall into strife,
 I'll ask the gods to send to me kind Death,
 Who healeth wounds and gives the weary rest.
 Ah, after Love, Death is our kindest friend.
 What man is he who, with stern, level gaze,
 Doth view us from the gate beyond? His look
 I do not like; strange, yet familiar, too.

Zora.

I know that man—a priest of Dagon he;
 He beckoneth to us, and 'twill not do
 For us his will to shun. Go thou within,
 Thou art the mistress of the house, and I
 Will shortly follow thee. Be on thy guard;
 These priests I like not well. He calls; go in.

PART VI.

THE GODS DEFIED.

Priest.

Thy name is Delilah ; once thou didst dwell
In Azzah, near great Dagon's temple walls.
In Sorek thou wert born ; and all thy kin
Unto Philistia's gods have faithful been.
And 'till that time the Hebrew Samson came
Unto thine house, to Dagon's shrine thou too
Didst many off'rings bring, because that he
Who rules and brings the fruitful harvest home
Had smiled on thee and made thee fair to men.
Thy beauty was the field whereon was sown
Fine gold and precious stones from many lands ;
Then thou wert glad, and loud thy songs did ring
When on the house-top thou at night didst lie;
The gods were with thee then. How is it now ?

Delilah.

Oh ! priest, the gods keep with me still, I think ;
And though to Dagon's shrine I come no more,
Because Ashtoreth claims my off'rings now,
Forgotten I have not, nor can forget,
The gods my fathers served, the gods I served
When but a child ; and though I go not oft
With gifts to any shrine, I thank the gods

That after many days they've brought to me
 The crowning crown of woman's crown of life—
 A love unsought, unbought; a sweet, free gift.
 And so I feel the gods smile on me still.

Priest.

That thou the gods dost not forget I think
 Is true. 'Tis not forgetfulness that makes
 Men false. Oft Memory doth scourge us so
 We learn to hate what once we fondly loved;
 And often Joy doth mem'ry lull to sleep.
 But in the time of joy, while mem'ry sleeps,
 'Tis well for us if some cold hand doth grasp
 Our hearts, and with relentless force doth drive
 Our dreams away. For, if we dream too long,
 So deeply 'graved upon our minds the dreams
 Become, when we awake, if we do 'wake
 At all, the dreams have dream-like ceased to be,
 And have of life become a real part.
 And ceasing then the gods to thank, we cry
 "'Tis ours, 'tis ours; the gods nor give nor take;
 "With our own hands we wrought and made this joy."
 Forget we then the holy vows we've made
 Unto the gods our first best fruit to bring,
 And little they receive who give so much.
 The gods reject what men do worthless hold.
 When men their gods would please, unto their shrines
 Rich gifts they bring, fine gold and jewels rare,
 To prove they hold their gods in high esteem,
 Who, having gold, unto the altar bring
 Something of lesser worth, the gods offend;
 And who the gods offend the gods destroy.
 What gifts hast thou on any altar placed
 Since thou to Dagon's temple ceased to come?

Delilah.

Since I the city left, and came to make
 My dwelling-place amidst these quiet scenes,
 But seldom have I wandered forth, nor oft
 Have I desire that place to seek again
 Which in my mind associate is held
 With things I'd fain forget. I think the gods
 Do smile on me, seeing my life glide on
 Secure in peace, and glad in this one love.
 But if for gold you come, I'll give you gold;
 And on the altar you my gift shall place.
 Had I much more, much more I'd gladly give.
 I give unto the gods with grateful heart.
 And as my gift is sent, so may it go;
 And so the gods my gift will not reject.

Priest.

Woman, I come not here for gold! Dost think
 That he who serves Philistia's High God
 Doth come unto the house of one who walked
 The streets of Azzah in the days gone by,
 Trailing her slimy garments to and fro,
 A noisome thing, beguiling any fool
 Who had of gold the price of her foul kiss,
 To ask for alms to give unto High God? Awake!
 Thou'st slept too long. I say to thee, awake!
 Thy dreams dismiss—thy dreams which make thee proud,
 And bid thee lift thy head before my face,
 And boast of what the gods have done for thee.
 I say to thee, Delilah, keep thy gold;
 I want it not; I'll to thy mind recall
 A vow which thou didst make long time ago,
 Ere thou this Nazarite hadst met, and ere

Thy senses had been snared in that foul mesh
 Which he doth weave 'round all whom he doth meet.
 Then thou didst swear unto the Most High God,
 If he would send this Samson to thy side,
 That thou wouldest means devise his strength to fret,
 Until he should so feeble grow that thou
 Wouldest bind him where he was, and call for men
 To drag him forth and cast him from the walls,
 Where he should rot, forgotten of all men;
 That dogs should gnaw his bones and men should say—
 “A woman hath her people’s wrongs avenged.”
 This was thy vow. Our god thy vow did hear.
 This man he led in unto thee. And thou,
 For that the night-time brings thee so much joy,
 And so much heaviness the day doth know,
 Thou dost thy vow forget. Is not this true?
 What answer will Delilah make than this?
 Yet if thou dost forget, think not the God
 Forgets. Thy prayer was heard, and answer sent
 In manner such that thou canst not reject;
 And thou art marked one of the happy ones,
 Selected by High God revenge to wreak
 Upon his foes. How hast thou kept thy vow?

Delilah.

Oh! priest, 'tis thou, not I, who dost forget;
 For I my vow did strive most hard to keep;
 But he was cunning; my too-feeble wit
 Was far out-matched by him. Dost thou forget
 That night—ah, that sweet night—when thee I told
 How Samson stopped before my door that day,
 And smiled on me while there I sat, and said
 That I was fair and good to look upon?
 And I to him did say, “Within are beds—

Soft, perfumed beds." He answered me, "My sweet,
 "Be sure this night I'll find a nesting-place."
 Then thou didst say, "The time hath come;" and so
 Thought I, and set to work my vow to keep.
 So when he came I wooed him with soft words,
 For I had found great favor in his sight;
 And he was but a man to me—a man
 Whose gold I'd take, then sell him like a dog.
 I strove to win the secret of his strength;
 And when he almost slept, he laughed, and bade
 Me bind him with green withes wherein the sap
 Was yet. Then while he slept, as he had told
 Thus I did do, and called in men to lie in wait;
 Then waked him, crying, "Thou art now betrayed."
 Then, as the swift flame eateth up the flax,
 So into ashes those green withes did fall;
 But he knew not the men were lying there.
 Again and again have I essayed to win
 The secret which he locketh in his breast.
 Each trial new hath as the first proved vain;
 He is too wise, and I can ne'er succeed.

Priest.

Delilah, all the hills and plains are red
 With blood drawn from our people who have died
 To keep the Hebrew out of this our land.
 This Samson in his day much wrong hath done.
 On many fields by curséd sorcery
 Philistia's bravest sons he's slain. Their blood
 Is unavenged. When men in battle fall,
 Face to face, 'tis sequence fair of the event;
 No need is there for vengeance then; they die
 As men at war should die—before their foes.
 This Samson fights not so; he's close-allied

With some dark foe, who strives to hurl us down.
 Philistia's gods upon her people frown
 That they this man do still permit to go
 Singing his triumph songs along the way
 With loud and boasting voice, while they in dread
 Shrink from his path. And now thy time hath come.
 I say to thee, Delilah, keep thy vow !

Delilah.

Have I not wrought with all my woman-craft
 To win from him the secret of his strength ?
 And if in woman's skill the means had lain
 I'd won it too; but all my craft was naught.
 And yet I did not cease, but strove again.
 'Tis woman's way, if she be foiled but once,
 Then curious she becomes ; and the thing
 Which to the common eye no import hath
 To her doth image forth things of great weight.
 'Twas thus with me ; the secret Samson hides
 Oft bore upon my mind ; I could not learn.
 Now, tell me what thou thinkest the best way,
 That I may serve the gods and please myself.

Priest.

The craft of this strange man too great doth prove ;
 And Askelon, Timnath, Ramath, Lehi,
 All plainly speak with speech we understand :
 "By man alone," they say, "such deeds as these
 Are not." The gates of Azzah he did bear away
 When we had snared him by the harlot's side.
 These things do prove that craft will not suffice
 To work against his craft, nor strength 'gainst strength.
 The gods declare that we must look to thee.
 If thou wouldst please the gods, the time hath come.

Delilah.

Have not I told thee why my vow hath failed?
 If he is craftier than other men,
 If his great strength all other strength defies,
 If he, as thou dost say, is strangely leagued
 With powers dark, whom men cannot defeat,
 What wilt thou have me do who am so weak?
 Oh! priest, speak on; my ears are open wide.

Priest.

For wealth I know thou hast but little care;
 The Chemarim of Dagon know that well;
 I'll ask thee, then, how dost thou love this man?
 What part of life doth he make up for thee?

Delilah.

The import of thy question I know not;
 But I will say he is my light, my sun,
 Beneath whose warming influence I bloom;
 And should some cloud between my sun and me
 Drift in, my leaf of life would fade and die.

Priest.

'Tis as I thought; once more I'll ask thee now
 If thou in fear dost hold the Most High God?

Delilah.

A simple woman I, and nothing know
 Of what thou fain wouldest learn; but I will say
 The will of him whom thou dost call High God,
 If I could know, I gladly would obey.
 I've never heard the voice of any god,
 And I know not what gods would have me do.

Priest.

I'll speak thee plain, nor longer sinuate:
In Syria of old a woman dwelt,
A daughter of Ammon, who made a vow
To Molech—for her people long had been
By Rephaim harassed; and she did vow,
If Molech unto Ammon would but give
A victory full and complete, then she
A sacrifice would make fit for the god.
So, when Rephaim next on Ammon fell,
Molech did hurl great spears of blighting flame
Upon the hosts of Ammon's enemies,
And they were all dispersed, and many slain.
Then they a peace did make, and Ammon ruled.
Remembering her vow, the woman went
To Molech's shrine, and took a goodly gift
Of fine white flour, and laid it there, and bowed,
But saw no sign to prove the god was pleased.
Then she did take two cooing, mated doves,
And in the holy fire she cast them down,
Then bowed her head, and still no sign received.
Then went she forth into the plain, and took
From the poor bleating mother's teat a lamb,
And brought it to the Chemarim, and knelt;
She saw the sacred fire the lamb consume,
And yet the mighty god no sign revealed.
Forth, then, she went once more, and from the flock
She took the great horned ram—the lordly mate
Of all the gentle ewes—and went again
And made a sacrifice, and, waiting, knelt;
But all was still; no sign the god sent forth.
And after that a pure red calf she took,
The choicest of her herd, and led the calf

To Molech's temple door ; the Chemarim
 Came forth and slew the calf, and bore it in.
 They bade the woman wait. She waited long ;
 The holy fire the temple wrapt in light ;
 Dark night came down; the god kept silent still.
 The woman, then, with heart oppressed with gloom,
 Went to her home, and, when the morn was come,
 Her strongest ox she took—the ploughman's pride—
 And drove him to the temple, crying loud,
 "Come forth, oh ! Chemarim, and slay this ox,
 "And let him be a sacrifice to him
 "Whom Ammon's sons do worship as their god ;
 "And tho' 'tis but a woman brings this ox
 "To offer unto him, the Ruler great,
 "Whose purifying fires burn within—
 "Oh ! Chemarim, make this my sacrifice
 "Acceptable unto our mighty god."
 When they the ox had slain, and on the fire
 The consecrated parts had cast, then she
 There flung herself face downward on the floor,
 And waited long, but all was still. The shrine
 Wherein great Molech sat no sign sent out.
 The Chemarim unto the woman went,
 And said, "Woman, why dost thou weeping wait ?"
 She lifted up her voice and said, "Because
 "My lord by Rephaim was slain —a vow
 "I made to Molech, Ammon's mighty god,
 "That if he'd smite the hosts of Rephaim,
 "And cast them down, a sacrifice I'd make
 "Fit him to please; and Molech heard my pray'r.
 "Low now lies Rephaim, and Ammon rules ;
 "And I have sought to keep my holy vow.
 "The best of all I had I here have brought,
 "And on great Molech's altar offered them,

"But still from him no sign have I received."
 Then spake the Chemarim: "Not thou alone
 "Hath on this altar sacrifices made
 "Unto our god for smiting Rephaim,
 "But thou a vow hast made, and thou must bring
 "Something of greater worth than others give.
 "What thing in all the world is dearer far
 "Than thine own life?" She answered, then, "My son;
 "My pretty babbling babe; of all the seed
 "His father sowed he is the only fruit.
 "My babe I hold far dearer than my life."
 They spake to her, and said: "If this be so,
 "Arise; go to thy house; bring here thy son."
 And she went forth and brought her laughing boy,
 And laid him down, and wept. Then kindled they
 The inmost fire of Molech's holy shrine,
 And placed the babe thereon. The mother bowed,
 The god stretched forth his hand and took the babe.
 Then from the cloudless skies was swiftly shot
 Into the woman kneeling there a lance
 Of flame, and she was dead; the god was pleased.
 Delilah, Dagon crieth 'gainst this man;
 Thy vow of thee the instrument hath made
 Which must be used; and as thou yearnest so
 The gods to please, into thy hands they've put
 The power to do. Dost thou now understand?

Delilah.

But darkly; speak thou plain; enlighten me.
 I ask the priest, What wouldst thou I should do?

Priest.

He comes to thee this night. A priestess thou,
 Thy bed the sacrificial altar make—

This man the sacrifice. When he doth sleep,
 Take thou this knife, and make it kiss his heart;
 That kiss will make him sleep so sound he'll wake
 No more. Now dost thou understand my will?

Delilah.

I think I do. Thou bidst me take this knife,
 And when my love is lying by my side,
 When sleep hath drove the cares of life away,
 When he, perchance, doth dream of me, and calls
 My name, and reacheth out for me—thou bidst
 Me then with this sharp knife to seek the heart
 Which hath so often beat against my breast;
 Thou bidst me make of that sweet bed, where he
 So oft hath slept in sure security,
 A place of blood—a place of treach'rous death,
 Thou tellest me this deed the gods demand—
 Demand that I with trait'rous smiles shall lure
 Unto my arms this king of men, and then
 When comes that sleep—that blissful sleep of love—
 That I shall in that happy time pour out
 The oil that keeps his lamp of life alight;
 Demand that I shall be a murderer,
 And slay my love while yet his kisses burn!
 Priest! Fool! A pliant tool thou thought'st to have
 Wherewith to work thy will; but there's one page
 Which thou with all thy craft hast failed to read—
 That page whereon is writ in letters large—
 “The love that woman giveth unto man
 “Is stronger than the fear she hath of gods.”
 Go, fool, and tell thy god my vow's forgot!

Priest.

The truth at last. Oh! harlot false! Not me
 Hast thou deceived, for I have long while known

Had thy desire with opportunity kept friends
 Philistia's gods—Philistia's sons—ere now
 Had seen this sorcerer destroyed. Beware !
 I say to thee beware ! A woman thou
 Whom men will soon cast down and spurn aside.
 Thou hast foresworn thyself before thy gods.

Delilah.

Disease there is that sometimes women smite,
 Which maketh them to love things monstrous, foul,
 And to the eye of health abhorrent—vile ;
 And sometimes woman's love so fierce doth grow
 That she, to make the one whom she doth love
 Acquaint with her hot pain, with her white teeth
 Will bite him till the red blood runneth down.
 This deed which thou to me didst just propose
 At first so monstrous made thee unto me
 That I a burning love for thee conceived ;
 And now this love so hot hath grown, I feel
 If thou dost longer tarry where thou art
 I'll plunge this knife into thy breast. Go, priest !
 If thou dost love thy life, I bid thee go !

Priest.

Our god is mad. His angry voice I hear.
 The Fish doth lash the waters till they moan.
 The Man doth howl across the land. A cloud,
 Black, black, with woe, o'er Philistia descends ;
 The walls of her temples shake ; her children
 Sleep in false security ! Woe ! Woe ! Woe !
 The sea god Dagon calls ; his voice I hear ;
 Against that god the Hebrew here hath brought ;
 He cries, and we must hurl Jehovah down.
 Woman, I go ; but thou, beware ! beware !

Delilah.

He's gone, and it is well ; his awful voice
 And words, so fraught with dread, affrighted me ;
 And Zora was not here ; ah, here thou art !

Zora.

Thy voices I did hear ; but feared to break
 The privacy thy converse seemed to claim.
 Then when the sounds of angry strife I heard,
 I felt that two could sooner discord heal
 If left alone, so each the cause might weigh ;
 For oft th' offense which each doth greatest deem
 Proves very light when balanced in the scale ;
 And oft the two will, by their own consent,
 Forget the fault, and friends become again ;
 While if another intervene the cause
 To judge, that preference which we all must feel,
 According as we in our minds do hold
 The disputants, cool judgment doth outweigh,
 So making us to wrongfully decide ;
 And then there is within us that which makes
 Us pleasure take in adding cause to cause,
 And, with tongues doubled by deceit, to make
 Each to the other more offensive seem,
 As some with vile intent will oft repeat
 The half of truth which they have painted black,
 And suff'ring add to one who suffers much ;
 While if the tale were told in colors true,
 Men would forgive, and soothe the burning wound.
 I'm sorry thou didst give the priest offense ;
 But, see, he stops and speaketh with yon man,
 Who hitherward did seem to bend his feet.
 A stranger he ; I know him not ; dost thou ?

Delilah.

In that garb, no ; and yet I know him well.
 A soldier, he, in Azzah there; I oft
 Have marked him passing by—an officer,
 A man of rank, who doth command the guard.
 Why he disguised unto this house should come
 I know not, and such coming much mislike.

Zora.

A soldier ; then thou hast for fear no cause;
 His words will be more light, his brain less cool,
 Than was the priest's from whom thou just didst part ;
 For 'tis the soldier's way with woman-kind.
 But if the woman will but modest be,
 And rule her tongue, and give him no lewd glance,
 He'll never do her hurt, e'en if he knows
 She is not what she seems. And if he comes
 On cunning deed intent, then any she
 His craft will quickly spy, and drive it all away.
 I know their ways, and also know the means
 From yonder soldier his intent to learn.
 In war the soldier's brave, yet full of guile ;
 In love he's quick, and much the ape doth seem.
 In most things I the soldier fully trust.
 The cunning priests I never trust at all.
 But see, he comes, and we must meet the man
 Surprised, as if his coming was unthought.
 Throw off restraint, and we may have some mirth.

PART III.

GOLD TEMPTETH NOT.

Officer.

Long and hot the day hath been. I've traveled far,
And fain would rest within the garden there,
And cool my feet where yonder fountain flows.
Fair maid, I pray thee, may I enter in?
For it doth seem none of my sex are nigh
Refusal or consent to give. Still I
Would rather drink a draught of water cool
And eat plain bread within the circle bright
Of maiden's smiles beneath some fig-tree's shade
Than drink deep draughts of Lebanonian wine,
And eat the richest meats with princes great.
Sweet maid, I ask thee, may I enter in?

Delilah.

A stranger thou to us and to our land,
And little seem to know our usage here.
The stranger from our doors doth ne'er depart
Weary and foot-sore;—that were ill indeed.
So enter thou the house, and what we can,
That will we do to comfort thee awhile,
Until such time as thou may'st wish thy way
To go. Come in; the stranger's welcome here.

Zora.

Now speakest thou with tongue too swift my friend.
This stranger here, if I did hear aright,
When first he spake, unto us he did say—

"Fair maid, I pray thee, may I enter in?"
 Now, I am of we twain the fairer one;
 Men oft me call "Moon of the Summer Night;"
 While thou art dark as is the early dawn.
 So if he asked the fairer maiden here
 To welcome him, then unto me he spake;
 But now again with changing words, he saith—
 "Sweet maid, I ask thee, may I enter in?"
 Unto which of us twain doth he now speak?
 If I be fair, and sweet to him am not,
 Then I shall go where I'm both sweet and fair;
 Whilst thou, who art not fair, but only sweet,
 May'st stay and cheer him while he rests his feet.

Officer.

To thee, fair "Moon of Summer Night," I spake.
 The infant's eye by light is first entranced;
 Still brightness soon doth bring it weariness,
 And then it seeks some thing that shadowed lies.
 'Tis thus I turn from thee to yon sweet Night;
 For she to me shall be the night—thou, day.
 Still, day and night are one; and well we know
 That he who from the day would night divorce
 Would be unwise. Day is the harvest time;
 By day we pluck and eat life's goodly fruits,
 And yet we know if day no ending had,
 The fruit would satiate the appetite
 'Till it would only pall, not satisfy;
 But while sweet Night, the sister of fair Day,
 With tender feet and outstretched arms doth come,
 And brings with her her dear handmaiden Sleep
 Unto the appetite almost exhaust,
 Renewal she doth bring. And so I say,
 Fair Day, to thee I speak; go not away;
 And thee, sweet Night, here with thy sister stay.

Delilah.

Thy answer's apt; with thee I do agree;
 Come in, nor longer weary waiting stand.
 A Night I know who would most surely die
 If her bright Day were from her arms divorced.
 Sisters thou callest Day and Night; not so
 Do I. The husband, Day I call, and night's
 The bride; and in her arms the Day doth sleep.

Zora.

Come in, Bethshemish, this "House of the Sun;"
 And yonder she, whom thou dost call the Night,
 A priestess is, and she the Sun doth serve.
 But I have drifted from my circle far;
 I have no sun; I'm but a wand'ring star.

Officer.

The star that drifteth from the influence
 Which once did bind it to its sweeping path
 Not long can stray alone, but soon must fall
 Into some other star, and so be lost.
 Sweet star, draw nigh, and it, perchance, may be
 Thou'l find thy sun—yes, find thy sun in me.

Zora.

Not so think I; not yet the time hath come;
 I'm too far off thine influence to feel;
 And thou I think art but a drifting star,
 And much I fear thou'dst carry me too far.

Delilah.

Cease, cease, this converse light; the food is spread;
 Put off thy sandals; there is water cool
 In yonder basin poured; lave thou thy feet,

Then come and eat and rest, then go thy way.
 The city is not far; there thou canst find
 A place to sleep; thou canst not here abide.

Officer.

I thank thee for this hospitality;
 So much I did not ask, nor so much wish.
 A cup of wine I'll drink, a few figs eat,
 Then go my way; for I a man did meet
 Who bade me to take heed, nor let the night
 Find me abroad, because a lion fierce
 Oft to this garden comes his mate to seek,
 And I that lion am not fain to meet.

Zora.

The man did tell thee true, for I myself
 At night have often heard that lion roar;
 And he doth roar so loud, I have heard said
 The soldiers down in Azzah oft come forth
 In war array when they his voice do hear,
 And oft they've strove a captive him to make;
 Or that he ever hath so cunning been,
 Or else so fierce, at large he still doth roam.

Officer.

The pretty birds who here do build their nests
 A song might sing to call the huntsmen forth
 Some night when that fierce beast securely sleeps;
 Thus they might snare him ere he'd do them harm.

Delilah.

The birds that freely fly and build their nests
 Where'er they please might often sing, and men
 Would let their songs unheeded pass them by;
 'Tis only when the birds are caged we stop
 And listen to their songs, and think them sweet.

Unfit the free bird is for a decoy.
To make them useful, men the trick must teach,
 Or cage, **and** make them thus unwitting act.

Officer.

Then would I lime a twig and **catch** the bird,
 And teach it how to come and **sing** a **song**
 To me when next the lion roamed abroad
 To howl his love beneath the garden wall,
 So I a snare might place the beast to catch;
 Then would my bird and I most famous be,
 And we'd become the greatest in the land.

Zora.

Why, lions oft are slain, and no such thing
 As thou dost say hath ever yet been done;
 No shepherd yet hath ere a prince been made
 For that by chance a lion he hath slain.
 Why, then, think'st thou such fortune would be thine?

Officer.

This lion, I have heard, descendeth oft
 Upon the flocks, and ravage sore doth make;
 And men are greatly feared lest he may come
 Upon them unaware and do much harm;
 So they will pay great price to have him dead.

Delilah.

Tell me, oh ! huntsman brave, the sort of lime
 Would suitest be to catch that singing bird.

Officer.

A yellow sort there is from Ophir brought;
 'Twill oft the swiftest, sweetest singer catch;
 Men name it gold—a goodly thing to have.

Zora.

Thy feet look not so red as do the feet
 Of men who through the land long journeys make ;
 Thy sandal soles I marked were all unworn ;
 Where didst thou rest and cast the old ones off ?

Officer.

At the mid-hour of the day I rested long
 Beneath a palm-tree in the plain beyond.

Zora.

Now, I do mark athwart thy brow deep lines
 Like soldiers have who heavy helmets wear.
 A soldier thou hast been. Is it not so ?

Officer.

A soldier I have been, and long have served ;
 Through many well-fought fields I've won my way.

Delilah.

Thou just didst say, "A soldier I *have* been ;"
 And wilt thou say, "*Now* soldier I am not ?"

Officer.

Naught will I speak that maketh me untrue ;
 For though this thing which I have set about
 Doth skill require, and much of secrecy,
 Yet I my foes would rather meet by day,
 In open field, as men meet men at war,
 Than coward-like creep in by bribery
 To steal the life that I may sometime seek
 In rightful war. Yes, I'm a soldier now—
 Commander of the guard in Azzah there.

Delilah.

Be not ashamed; we all have played a game;
 I from the start did know thee well, but thought
 'Twould better suit to seem to know thee not,
 That I might quicklier learn with what intent
 Disguised thou comest here. The game is done.
 Now tell me quick what thou dost wish from me,
 Although it seems thou hast already told.

Officer.

'Tis told that Samson visits thee this night.
 The army that doth lie in Azzah now
 Could quick, if it were sent, this place surround.
 If thou, while Samson lies asleep, wilt come,
 Or send unto my house a message straight,
 Upon him we will fall in manner such
 Nor craft, nor skill, nor human strength combined
 His life can save, or snatch him from our hands.
 And yet, if he resistance doth not make,
 We will him captive take and save his life.
 If thou consentest this to do, I'll make thee rich—
 So rich that thou need'st never more return
 Unto that path which thou so long hast trod,
 For men do say that thou a woman art
 Who loveth not to live the harlot's life.

Delilah.

That thou art brave, I willingly concede.
 Thou art not wise; thee this I plainly tell.
 He who by bribery doth seek to win
 His fellow foul, vile treachery to do,
 Two hateful wrongs by this one act doth make:
 Himself unto himself he makes so vile
 That in the hour when calm remembrance comes

Himself he hateth for the evil done;
And he who's tempted, and the wrong doth do
Which he had not performed but for the gold
That his dire need did make too hard to lose,
Thus buying for himself repentance dear,
And at his tempter's door doth make him heap
Reproach and curses fraught with hate, and thus
Doth make him worse for cherishing this hate.
Or else, if he who's tempted is so vile
That further wrong no suff'ring doth evoke,
The tempter then, tho' nobler once he was,
Is thus brought down till level he becomes
With the base thing which he hath bought with dross.
But the worst wrong that man can ever do
Is that which makes man look with eyes suspect
Upon his brother-man, and drives away
From each one's breast that soft, sweet sympathy,
The seeds of which are sown within the womb—
The seeds which to the world would bring rich fruits
If man would listen to the voice within,
Which tells him each wrong act, like seed that's sown
New seeds bring forth, which on the winds are borne
To other fields than his, and there in time,
By transmutations strange, spring up anew
To bring a harvest-time of darker deeds;
While, if the better seed he'd cultivate,
When comes the wind to bear the seed abroad,
And they do germinate, the harvest, then,
Unto each reaper would so worthy seem
That they the same sweet seed would strive to sow.
Go, soldier, and no more with gold attempt
To weaken love and bring it down so low
That it to treachery so dark should turn.
My speech to thee is mild, because I know

This act doth not accord with thine own wish,
 But thou didst yield to what at first did seem
 Thy duty plain, but what thou now dost know
 Was evil thought that bade thee poison love.

Zora.

The night is nigh, the lion soon may come,
 And, stranger, thou from home art far away.
 It wise would be for thee thy way to go,
 Thy bed to find, while day doth linger yet.
 If thou wert that which thou did'st seem to be,
 Friends thou wouldst leave, and be thyself a friend;
 But since unto this house disguised thou com'st,
 We've made thee draw the hangings from our eyes;
 And though thou art not now so fair to us,
 Unto thyself thou'rt far more true, I think.
 Now, knowing what thou art, we'll trust thee still,
 And hope, as thou art brave, we'll find thee just.
 And if again the time to thee doth come
 When thou disguise may'st useful think to make,
 Shun women then, for women have a way
 Of seeming blind to things they plainly see.
 And if some day while wandering afar
 This homeless, drifting star should near thee fall,
 Then lift me up, and place me on thy breast,
 For stars like me have oft sore need for rest.

Officer.

I'll leave thee now; but ere I go I'll own
 I've greatly wronged thee in this base emprise.
 And yet, the day may not be distant far
 When with good deeds thy good advice I'll pay.
 I'll not forget; forget not thou to ask.
 And though by treachery I'll not pursue

This Samson, whom I know is fondly loved
By thee, Delilah, still I'll warn thee now
For him I'll watch, and yet a shaft may speed
To bring the quarry down; but for thy sake,
If e'er he's captive made, his life I'll save.

Zora.

I said we'd find the soldier brave and true.
Depart, and may sweet peace attend with thee.

PART IV.

MY LOVE HATH COME.

Delilah.

See, Zora ; 'tis the twelfth hour of the day.
How plain and true the morn oft shadows forth
The sorrows which the day will bring to us.
At me thou madest mock when I did say
With gloom I was oppressed, and feared the day
Grief unto me would bring. I fear so still.
The clouds which just have passed the prelude is
Unto the storm which gathers swift and black.
A sense of coming evil casts its shadows
O'er my soul. Whence it cometh, I know not.
That priest, who first with kindly words did speak,
Then quickly changed to threats of angry gods,
And sought my fear so great to make that I
Would like a dumb thing do his awful will,
With fear first held me bound, and next so wroth
Did I become I thirsted for his blood.
Then came the soldier with his bribery.
At him I laughed, and yet I fear him much.
What next will make assault upon my love?
The gods have failed, and the more potent gold.
When gods and gold both fail, what then is left?

Zora.

The gods from Love not often can seduce.
I hold this Love is mightiest god of all.

We women unto him so much do yield,
 And never count that we do yield at all ;
 While other gods demand do seem to make
 Upon us for the things we dearest hold,
 And take them from us, leaving us the pain
 Of bearing our sad loss with no reward.
 But Love, who also bringeth with him pain,
 Doth turn the pain into so much of bliss,
 We would not part with him for all the gods.
 The strongest man to Love will proudly kneel,
 And bend his head in gentle reverence
 Before the shrine where Love doth make his home.
 Each man a temple builds, and sets therein
 The image Love doth wear for him. Not all
 The same ; in diff'rent form Love comes to all.
 And as for gold, it hath, we know full well,
 No potency if balanced in the scale
 'Gainst Love. But still tho' gods and gold may fail,
 There is a thing more dangerous by far ;—
 A thing which seems of womankind a part ;—
 A thing which oft hath woman made to do
 Some deed nor gods nor gold could e'er persuade.
 I warn thee now of this thing to beware ;
 'Tis in thyself ;—thyself now closely watch.

Delilah.

About these things so wisely thou dost speak,
 I fain must think that either thou dost love
 Or else have loved. Which is it? Be not false.

Zora.

The woman who hath never loved a man,
 And o'er her heart a watchful guard doth set
 That love may never enter thro' the gates,
 Of all her life a mockery doth make.

She doth herself unsex, and false becomes
To all that maketh woman high esteemed.

Delilah.

The men who come in ships from far-off lands
Strange stories tell of women who their lives
Do consecrate unto their gods. I know
Of these things less than thou. What dost thou think
Of women such as these, if such there be?

Zora.

Such women are not of the common kind.
And though they seem of common clay—compact,
Earth-like, and frail—still, earthy they are not;
But forms they are the mighty ones have sent;
And though with human hands they seem to work,
Be sure the gods those human hands direct.
The love such women feel embraceth all;
Sexless are they, and yet to all espoused.
All women, such as these, we know are not.
The gods select the vases which they use.

Delilah.

Here's Tirzah here, my old handmaiden true.
I'll question her, and see what she doth know
Of love. She's old, and age makes women wise.
Tirzah, my friend and I this day have talked
Of love, and what to woman love doth bring.
Now, thou art old, and oft hast loved, I know;
So tell me which is best—to love, or not?

Tirzah.

Of what the wise may speak I little know;
But ignorance doth oft the key possess
To open doors the wise must break with force.

Friendship and love are two, and sep'rate far;
For jealousy with love doth ever go,
And jealousy to hate is close allied.
So love, we see, approacheth close to hate.
I speak of love which woman bears for man—
The love that man for woman bears alone.
All other love a diff'rent meaning hath,
And nothing is akin unto the thing
Of which you ask. This love doth make us proud
To see the one beloved more grand, more high,
Than all the men by whom he is surround,
That he unto the eyes of all the world
May star-like shine, with light more bright and full
Than any other star within his sky.
But love will neither upward gaze, nor down.
The two must level stand, or not at all.
If either from the other upward soars,
Or lower doth descend, the time must come
When that attraction strong which love doth wield
Will set to work to equal them again.
Then, by some law—strange, unexplained—
It seems the high must fall the low to meet.
And having strength to soar up to the skies,
Soft sympathy doth come to make them weak,
And thus the lower level they must find.
Therefore, if we would love, we still should seek
A mate from our own stock ;—not higher bred,
Or, worse than that, one from a mongrel herd.
In every path a high there is and low ;
And passing on our way we each may climb
Unto the highest height of our own path.
But there are many paths, and far apart.
And so, to love, or not, which is the best,
Dependeth much, I think, on where we love.

Delilah.

And, Tirzah, when a woman loves, what way
 Should she herself comport to hold the man
 Whom she doth love securely unto her?

Tirzah.

I think the woman who doth rule the house,
 If she be wed or unwed mistress there,
 Should keep her scroll of life unfolded wide,
 So, when the master will, he plain may read,
 And see that she is faithful unto him.
 If this she'll do, she'll win his loving trust ;
 Nor need she fear false tongues and envy then.
 But secret deeds have wounded love to death.

Delilah.

If from the man no secrets we should have,
 How should the man unto the woman act?

Tirzah.

In all the things which make their lives as one—
 The joys, and griefs, and all adversity—
 The man unto the woman should confide,
 Nor hold apart, and wound her with untrust.
 Before her he should stand with open brow,
 And by his life to her example make.
 He should be honest, proud, and ever chaste,
 And bridle well his tongue, that no word fall
 Whose obscene sense would wound fair decency.
 Obscenity respect will surely kill.
 If a man with some woman doth consort,
 Whose life unchaste the sense of shame hath dulled ;
 If he will think, he'll say, "men made her thus ;"
 And, for she once was pure, but foul became,

Respect he'll give which she cannot demand.
 And if the man something doth keep untold,
 And yieldeth not to importunity,
 Then must the woman wait until the time
 The man for trust the secret will reveal ;
 For if through idle curiosity
 The woman doth persist, and thus doth learn
 That which the man would wisely from her keep,
 Knowledge thus gained no happiness doth bring,
 But oft is turned into a curse of pain.

Delilah.

Wise are thy words, and heavy with advice.
 Attend me in my robing chamber now.
 Come, Zora, we'll make ready for the night.

Zora.

Too vain and proud I fear thou wilt become.
 Such wealth of robes I ne'er have seen before.

Delilah.

That I am vain, I will avow. Why not?
 To me my beauty hath two harvests brought ;
 First, reapt I gold, and now I gather love.
 Hand me my mirror there, that I may view
 What Samson loves. It beautiful should be.
 Give me attire of what I have the best.
 Let my first garments be of linen fine,
 The cinctures for my loins embroidered rare ;
 Then bring my robes of richest Tyrian dye ;
 My sandals soft, with jewels fine embossed.
 Anoint my hair with precious ointments sweet,
 Then bind my brows with yonder scarlet crown,
 And, Tirzah, shall I paint mine eyes this night?

Tirzah.

Thine eyes are like deep pools that lie in shade,
And paint doth make them no more beautiful.

Delilah.

Well, leave mine eyes unpainted, then, and say,
Now I'm attired, how doth my beauty sit.

Zora.

Queen-like thou art—a woman beautiful.
And when I look upon thee as thou art,
I feel, if man I was, I'd love thee too.
And if thy love I'd win, 'twould make me proud.

Delilah.

Ha ! ha ! When woman's tongue such words doth speak,
It seems not strange if man be stricken dumb.
One thing I lack : hand me mine earrings, now—
Mine earrings with the scroll mysterious—
For they, 'tis said, are potent to protect
From evil things. My mother gave them me
When but a child. Throw ope the lattice now ;
My heart doth speak ; it saith my love is nigh.

SONG.

Oh ! night, beautiful night, sweet night is now with me ;
 My love I soon shall meet ; my love I soon shall meet.
Oh ! night, beautiful night, his form I soon shall see ;
 With kisses in the mouth my lover I will greet ;
 My lover I will greet.

He comes ; he comes. I hear his footsteps now.
My love hath come at last. Now will I go,
That I may greet him ere he enters in.

Zora.

The nature of this love I cannot tell.
So fierce and hot, it burns. To me it seems
A dangerous thing, and I such love would dread.

Tirzah.

Not unto all such love doth come. But few
Of all our kind such love can ever know,
And none but those the gods have made to tread
In paths apart from those they fain would walk.
'Tis only after life hath lost its zest,
After we have found the emptiness of all,
And night and morn bring ripened bitterness,
Doth such love come. And it must live alone,
And feed upon itself. It will not bear
Aught else within the heart where it doth dwell.
It putteth forth no leaves; 'tis blossomless.
The fruits of such a love are empty husks.
Who loveth thus doth ever crave for food;
And oft they hear Hope's mocking voice cry out,
"Come, feed." Then stones and serpents they receive.
The man or woman whom such love doth seize
Is mad. On such the gods have fixed a curse.

PART V.

A CUP OF WINE.

Delilah.

Let me loose thy sandals from off thy feet.
Now cast thy lebûsh off and rest thee here,
While I with perfumed waters cool will lave
Thy feet. For thee I've waited all the day.
Now thou art here, my heart doth sing for joy.

Samson.

Rise thou from off the ground. I like not thus
To see thee kneeling there with that sweet mouth
So nigh the dust. I thought Delilah proud;
And once she was, but lowly now become.
Rise, thou, and come with me into the house.

Delilah.

Ah, now thou sayest wrong, for proud I am.
'Tis thus my pride I show—the pride of love,
That liketh not to see the one beloved
From other hands too much receive, but wills
Those things to do which humblest are, for these
Unto the eyes of one who loves do seem
Higher to lift the doer. Then the things
Which all may do not such sweet value have
As those the swift, soft hands of love perform.
Within is one who in my girlhood days
My playmate was, and thou must love her too.
Go thou before, and I will follow thee.

Samson.

If I must love her, then some other place
 I'll make than that wherein Delilah sits.
 For there she'll find no room; 'tis over-full.

Delilah.

Come, Zora, he of whom so much I've talked
 To-day is here thy greeting to receive;
 And he would of this household make thee one.

Zora.

Peace be with thee, and peace be on thine house.
 Thy servant greets thee; thou hast made her glad.

Samson.

I thank thee for thy friendship. In this house
 Thou'rt welcome for thy love of her who rules.
 Come, thou, Delilah, sit beside me now,
 And tell me all that thou this day hast done;
 And by one day I'll strive to judge the rest.
 I've absent been so long I scarce may know
 If I be master here or not. Say thou.

Delilah.

If thou no longer master art, then he
 Who master is hath passed the door and failed
 To enter in. Alone I've been since thou
 Departed from my side until this day.
 The morn was sad 'till Zora came to me,
 And after that we talked in woman-wise
 Until the mid-day heat had come, and then
 We forth into the garden went, and sat
 Beneath a sycamine, where we could pluck

Its ripened fruit ; and there we talked and sang ;
 And so the day went on. Now thou art here,
 And I forget that day hath ever been.

Samson.

And so the time hath passed but slow the while
 'Till Zora came to chase the gloom away.
 For thy sake, sweet, I'm glad that she did come.
 But is that all ? " We talked and sang and talked
 In woman-wise." The talk, I fear, was not
 Wise woman-like. Say, is there naught besides
 To tell of what thou twain this day have wrought ?

Delilah.

Unto this house there came this day two men :
 A priest of Dagon one, and me he strove
 With dreadful words to fright to do a deed
 Which I would not. Him I did drive away.
 When he not far had gone, another came—
 A soldier he, disguised, but not from me—
 The captain of the guard in Azzah there ;
 And he me offered heaps of gold to do
 What I for gods, or gold, or men, would not.
 But they have sorely frightened me, my love.
 Be watchful thou ; men traps do set for thee.

Samson.

So now again they seek me to awake ;
 And that I may awaken sore and mad,
 My heifer they would yoke unto their plough.
 Now I do feel the time doth swift approach
 When I again must strike ; and when I strike,
 The harvest which so long hath ripening stood
 I'll gather in. Such havoc I shall make
 My deeds of yore will gentle to them seem.
 Is there no more that thou this day hast done ?

Delilah.

Yes, much ; we gathered grapes and juicy figs,
 And then we plucked some fragrant flowers, too,
 And wove us crowns and listened to the birds.
 Then I, because thou'st been away so long,
 Of goodly things a feast have all prepared ;
 Such things as thou dost say God bids thee eat.
 I wish thy God had bade thee drink some wine.
 Its rich perfume would gladden all thy heart.
 'Tis better far than milk of kine or goats,
 If wisdom rules the mind of him who drinks.

Samson.

Now, for thy feast I come to thee prepared.
 As for thy wine, of that I nothing know.
 The Nazarite of wine doth never drink.
 My God did sep'rate me from other men
 Ere yet the seed was sown from which I grew.
 But is this thy feast quite ready now ? If 'tis,
 We'll eat and merry be, and thou some songs
 With Zora there shall sing—'twill please me well ;
 For music is a wine that I much love ;
 Sweet strains will often me intoxicate,
 And make me stagger as do men when drunk.
 A song of love, when by a woman sung
 Whose heart keeps time unto the words she sings,
 Doth heat my blood and make it fiercely beat
 Against the walls which hold it prisoned fast.
 For woman I have suffered much, and yet
 May suffer more ; and if I do, the fault
 Is not that I do gifts of wisdom lack,
 But 'tis that God so fair hath woman made ;
 And I, my love for God to show, love her.

Delilah.

And yet 'tis said thy God hath subject made
 The woman unto man. If this be true,
 If thou thy will doth yield to woman's sway,
 Dost not thou then thy God's will bring to naught?

Samson.

It may be so. Too deep thy question is
 For me straight answer now to give. I know
 That Mosheh says, "Man first Adamah was,
 "And without form till God did give him shape."
 "Then from Adamah formed God woman took."
 And after that a spirit He them gave—
 That spirit which is life—and sent them forth.
 And then the sons of God came down and took
 Fair women to be brides, and gave them love.
 Thus woman, who to man was subject made
 By Him who from the red earth called man forth,
 Through that same love which from his sons they won
 Were freed. Inherit I from that good seed
 Of love sown long afore so large a share
 That I the strong desire to sow again
 Cannot control. So woman rules me much.

Zora.

The incense burns; the couches are perfumed.
 All waiteth now the lord and mistress here.

Delilah.

My lord, ascend thou now unto thy place.
 Eat what thou liketh best. Wilt not thou drink
 One cup of this pomegranate wine—a wine
 Fit but for woman's drink? Not oft do men
 Their thirst with this assuage; for 'tis too mild;
 Nor is it wine that those who love like well.

Samson.

Do thou and Zora sing a song of love;
'Twill me athirst; then I may drink the wine.

Zora.

Go, girl, my psalt'ry bring. I ne'er can sing
Without some instrument my voice to lead.
The soft, sweet undertones of well-touched strings
Bring thoughts to me which give unto my song
A meaning sung alone it would not have.

Samson.

Be the song one of love, and love alone,
'Twill please me then, and woman should not sing
Of aught beside. It doth me much misplease
A voice to hear fit but to sing a babe asleep—
Cracking the air with unharmonic shrieks;
Else, mouthing some ditty, dolorous, dull,
Of the Past, and the Dead, who hear no more.
No; sing me of love triumphant and strong.

Delilah.

Zora, sing thou first; I will list to thee.
Some song I love it may to mind recall.

Zora.

I'm ready. Though the burden of my song
Is love, it tells of other things than love.

SONG.

Once darkness reigned, and all the earth
Was like a voiceless tomb;
No birds trilled forth sweet songs of mirth,
No flowers here did bloom;
No life in air or in the sea—
This was the realm of Gloom.

No songs of birds, no sweet perfume,
And all was gloom ; then all was gloom.

Then unto earth God turned His face
And smiled, and there was light ;
And life filled all the empty space
Where erst was only night ;
Then love filled all the air and sea ;
Earth was the bride of Light.

The king of day, the queen of night
With love did rule, and love is light.

Once earth to me was like a tomb—
With neither life nor light ;
No stars were then, or sun, or moon ;—
That was a time of night.
But love did come ; then fled the gloom,
And all was turned to light.

Now love doth rule me day and night,
And all is light ; yes, all is light.

Samson.

That song I like, for that it telleth us
That love is light and darkness only rules
Where love is not. The light doth purify.
Thus, we who love, impure do never seem
Unto ourselves, tho' tongues censorious
Oft lash us sore and hold us all unclean,
Tho' married we by ritual of the heart.
Delilah, I that cup of wine will drink.
I've made no vows ; the vows were made for me
Ere yet I was. My mother and my sire
The vows did make, and me did consecrate

To be a Nazarite. I, after them,
 When but a child, the bond endorsed. I know
 Not if this strength of mine doth emanate
 From these same vows. Strong men have been before,
 Nor consecrated they to any god;
 So I will not myself deprive of all
 That makes life good to live. Ah! wine is good!
 What is that other sort that gleameth there
 In yon Egyptian vase? A jewel large
 And bright; it glows like ruby precious rare.

Delilah.

Ah! this is wine whose rich perfume brings joy
 Unto the sad and weary heart, and makes
 It leap as leaps the lover's for his bride.
 'Tis Lebanonian wine, heavy with age,
 Yet full of mirth. Drink thou one cup of this
 Some day when sad, and it will make thee glad.
 If thou art weak, 'twill give thee strength anew;
 If thou dost love, 'twill make thy love more warm.
 So I this wine have named, "The blood of love."

Samson.

Sing thou to me a song—low, soft and sweet.
 While list'ning unto thee one cup I'll drink
 Of yonder jeweled juice—"The blood of love."
 And if to love this wine doth add new zest,
 I'll drink again, nor fear to quaff full deep.

Zora.

Now hast thou cast behind thee all thy vows,
 And by one step hath passed the portals barred
 Since life begun in thee. Be not too bold.
 Vows made to gods are not vows made to men;

Nor wise I think it is such vows to break.
 So, take thou heed, nor in thy strength be weak.
 To drink the wine doth nothing count alone.
 Much wine I drink myself, and love it well;
 And who hath naught to lose attracts not thieves;
 But wine the key doth often prove that opes
 The door of that strong place wherein we store
 Our treasures rare, and they are stol'n away.
 Who drinketh not red wine a wise man is.

Delilah.

Drink on, my love; I lift to thee the cup.
 And when thy heart with wine and love is filled,
 And sleep doth softly kiss thee in thine eyes,
 I'll guard thee, love, and keep thee from all harm.

Samson.

From the mouth of one words of wisdom flow;
 The other language hath I love the best.
 I'll laugh to-night; to-morrow I'll be wise.
 Now, sweet one, sing thy song; mine ears do thirst.

Delilah.

The hours so swiftly fly, the night is old.
 One song I'll sing, and then away to rest.

SONG.

As the wild hart drinks from the fount 'neath the hill,
 From the fount of my love, come, drink thou thy fill.
 As in the lush pastures the sheep safely browse,
 In the pastures of love I'll feed thee, my spouse.
 The hills of my love are like Hermon's white snows;
 The vales thou shalt rove are ablush with the rose;
 The roof of my mouth drips with honey for thee;
 Then come, my beloved, oh! come unto me.

As the red rose opens her lips for the dew,
 My lips, my beloved, I'll open for you.
 Then come with a kiss—a kiss, love, for me ;
 I'm waiting, beloved—yes, waiting for thee.
 My bath hath been made ; I've appointed my house ;
 Come with thy sweet savors, come to me, my spouse.
 Thy bed is perfumed, and is ready for thee ;
 Then come, my beloved, oh ! come unto me.

I sought for my love in the night and made moan ;
 My soul it went forth and returned all alone ;
 I called for my love from the shores of the day,
 And the winds heard my voice, and went on their way.
 My girdle I loosed, my loins I unbound ;
 With the fringe of my garments I swept the ground ;
 With the dark earth of mourning I cover'd my head,
 And I cried out, alas ! alas ! he is dead !

There came to me then, like a star gleaming clear,
 The face of sweet Hope, and she whisper'd, "he's here."
 I sprang from the earth, and my heart it was light,
 For there stood my love by my side in the night.
 I pillow'd his head on my breast till the day ;
 The dew of the night with my hair kept away.
 Oh ! Love, oh ! my king, I have builded thy throne
 In the courts of my soul, where thou reignest alone.

Samson.

Thy song, my sweet one, pleaseth me full well ;
 The wine, too, hath for me a pleasant taste,
 And I with thee another cup will drink.
 'Tis strange, ah ! very strange, to feel this wine
 Burst from the channels where we pour it down,
 And, rushing forth to the outermost parts
 With kisses warm, fond lovers makes them all.

Yes, fill again ; I feel the scaldent blood
Grow hot. Ha ! ha ! another love I've won !

Zora.

'Tis time for us our beds to seek. The night
Hath almost passed away. See, all the east
With saffron now is robed, and I will go.
Seek thou, my friends, some rest. Peace be with thee.
Nor unlooked harm assail thee on thy way.

Samson.

If thou wilt go, may peace attend with thee.
This night hath been but short ; I need no sleep.

Delilah.

Seek thou thy couch. A little while, and we
Unto the inner chamber will repair.
'Tis not much need that we the day should greet
With open eyes. So, if we chance to sleep
When he doth come, we'll say, "To Ashtoreth
Our tribute we have paid." Peace go with thee.

PART VI.

THE SECRET TOLD.

Samson.

I've opened wide the door which once did keep
My friend from coming in. I'll make amends
By warmer welcome now. Fill thou my cup,
Delilah. Again I'll drink. Drink thou with me.

Delilah.

One other cup we'll quaff, and then to rest.
Thy head with this new friend is not acquaint.
'Tis best with moderation him to treat
'Till thou his strength hast gauged, for he is strong
With strength insidious. Not all at once
Doth he his strength put forth, but by degrees.

Samson.

Ah ! what is this ? With double sight I see ;
And swift thoughts come that find no utterance.
My brain doth whirl as after merry dance,
And now my brow doth beat and hot doth seem.
Such throbbing pain I ne'er have felt before.

Delilah.

Come, love, with me. Some sleep will make thee whole.
The pain effect is of an unused cause.
I'm sorry now that thou the wine didst drink.

Samson.

Not so am I. It pleaseth me to know
 The strange effect that wine doth have on man.
 The fever thirst this wine in me creates
 Is not like other thirsts, nor satisfied
 With deeper draughts, but ever grows and grows.
 Of all my will possession it doth take ;
 Strong reason it ejects, and maketh me
 On things impossible to meditate.
 Misty shadows from some realm unknown
 It summoneth to me. The very pain
 Of drunkenness pertains of so much joy
 I now would fain sink to its last abyss,
 So I might once its secrets all resolve.
 Who having once been drunk doth drink again,
 He wisdom lacks ; who thrice doth drink, is worse ;
 But he who yieldeth all his will to wine,
 By devils is possessed, and he is mad.
 A drunkard I could never be. Not I.
 Just one more cup, then I with thee will go.

Delilah.

Unsteady are thy feet. Here rest thee, love.
 If thou dost sleep, I'll watch thee till the morn.
 Now, on this couch lie down ; I'll pillows bring
 That thou thy head may'st rest ; and thou wilt sleep.

Samson.

My head doth ache. No pillows bring. No need
 Have I for pillows now, for I my head
 Upon thy bosom soft once more will rest.
 'Tis long, my love, since sleep hath found it there.

Delilah.

Let me these braids unplait; too tight they seem.
 The loosened hair I know will give thee ease.
 Ah! see the golden fountains flowing down—
 My love, my sun, thou'rt garmented in light.

Samson.

Bring me more wine! Who talketh of my hair?
 Ah! Delilah, thou? Love, thy lips are red;
 Pomegranate juice thy cheeks doth paint; thine eyes
 Are deep and soft as are the dove's. Kiss me,
 My love. My hair? Yes, it is bright and long;
 'Twas never cut. I'm strong, Delilah; yes,
 Great is my strength. Wine! Give me more wine!
 The Nazarite no wine should drink; but I
 Was bound without my will. My hair touch not.
 I'm safe with thee, my love; yes, safe with thee.
 Ah! dost thou love me, sweet? Kiss me again.

Delilah.

Yes, I do love thee—love thee more than life;
 But sleep, beloved, sleep, and drink no more.

Samson.

Yes, I will drink of wine yet one cup more.
 Bend down thine head; I'll whisper unto thee:
 A woman dwelt in Timnathah of old;
 And she her husband's riddle did betray.
 But that betrayal, which was ill-conceived,
 Was turned to good;—that woman now is not.
 This wine doth make impediment to speech,
 Yet thought begets which I to words would turn.
 What sayest thou about my golden hair?

Delilah

I nothing said about thine hair, my love;
 But since it seems of such great worth to thee,
 I tempted am to cut it off and weave
 Of it a priceless curtain for my heart.

Samson.

A woman did me once betray, but thou
 Wilt not. For thee to-day a robe I bought—
 A Babylonish robe of rare design.
 To-morrow I will bring it unto thee.
 What was it thou did'st say? Cut off my hair?
 Oh! no! Place thou thine ears close to my lips.
 A thing thou should'st not know I'll tell to thee.
 But thou dost love me, and will not betray.
 If thou from off my head should shear these locks
 My strength would pass away, and I'd become
 So weak that any man could lay me low.
 What's that I've said? Ha! ha! 'Twas but a jest;
 Heed thou me not. I'll sleep. Touch not my hair.
 One draught of wine—a kiss. Now I will sleep.

Delilah.

He sleeps. Too deeply he hath drunk. His mind
 To wine unused hath wandered here and there
 With no intent or purpose fixed, but all at odds.
 He lieth helpless now, and none more weak
 Than he—the strongest man of all earth's men.
 The armies of the world in war's fierce rage
 Are for destruction weak if in the scale
 They balanced be with thee, oh! strong red wine.
 How sound he sleeps; and I, a woman weak,
 The sole guard am o'er him whom princes fear,

And all the priests in Philistia do hate.
 The glossy tresses of his hair do seem
 Like woven mantle of some cunning dye.
 What was it that he mouthed about his hair?—
 That if his hair were shorn away his strength
 Would perish, too? A jest it was, I know.
 With leasings he hath often me deceived.
 Dear love, sleep on; I'll watch thee well; and when
 Thou dost awake, 'twill make thee mirth to hear
 Of what the wine hath made thee say and do.
 Much noise 'twould take to call him from this sleep.
 These tresses heavy I will lift and kiss.
 He doth not move. Ah, me, I wonder much
 What he did mean—"My strength would fade away
 If thou didst shear my tresses off." How strange!
 He trusts me not, yet saith "Thou'll not betray."
 A Nazarite doth never shave, I know,
 Nor cut his hair—that is his vow—till time
 Hath passed and he his vow hath all fulfilled.
 All Nazarites are not like Samson strong.
 And when the things are done which they have vowed,
 Straight then their hair they cut and shave their beard;
 Nor do they weaker grow for doing this.
 So in the hair strength lieth not, I know.
 Sleep on, beloved. Ashtoreth with me
 Doth watch, and thou art safe. So sound he sleeps
 That I these locks might steal, nor him awake.
 'Twould be jest this thing to do, and then
 When he awakes to say, "Thou didst thyself
 "Thine hair all cut away, for that thy time
 "Is passed, and all thy vows are now performed."
 Yes, if I but knew no evil would arise
 'Gainst thee, dear love, I'd steal this gold away.
 Yet he uneasy was, and sore distressed,

Because of what to me he whispered low.
The wine made him to think of weighty things,
And speak but light; I've heard wine talk before.
Now, if this hair from off his head were cut,
Men of his strength would have no thought; they'd say—
“His vow's accomplished; when we offer wine
“Or ask a thing, he will not ‘Corban!’ cry.”
Yes, I this hair will shear away, and thus
My will may have and hold him at my side.
If truth to me he told, if he grows weak,
He'll here abide; so men who wait for him
May never know his hair is cut away.
The hair again will grow—his strength return.
But while he's weak, upon my arms he'll lean,
And for a space dependent be on me.
How wroth he'll be; still, as he loveth me,
He will forgive nor take the matter sore.
What have I done? While yet I did but think
Upon a deed, that deed I have performed,
And scarce know when 'twas done. Oh! curse of thought,
When dwelt upon too long it doth become
Not thought, but deed, and thus a life be marred.
If we, when first a thought doth enter in
Which bids us evil do, would quick eject
And beat him down, or, lacking strength for this,
If we would, as the leper, cry “Unclean!
“Unclean!” so men might learn the thought within
Our minds, and learning, save us from ourselves,
All might be well. The worst of life is this:
We having power to think, are slaves to thought.
He sleepeth still! Oh! could I place this hair
That lieth here like heaps of writhing snakes
Upon his head again, where it did grow
His ornament and pride, I'd gladly give

My jewels all; yes, all that I possess
That precious is. I have his trust betrayed—
Most precious gift that ever yet was mine.
'Tis morn; the day god bursteth from the East
In joyous robes attired. My god lies here;
And when he doth arise, with clouds he'll come.
What sounds are those I hear? The wave-like beat
Of marching men it seems. I forth will look.
Ashtoreth! Dagon! Ye gods of my land,
Guard thou and guide me now my love to save.
The forewarned storm doth gather o'er me swift,
And soon athwart my path 'twill fiercely break.
I see the glancing arms of soldiery,
And hitherward they come, with what intent
I know too well. Much I mistrust me now.
By mine own act I have deprived the man
For whom they seek of that which makes them come,
A host multitudinous, and panoplied
In war's array. Forebodings dark and dread
Now fill my mind. Yet I this host may foil.
Rulers of earth and air! God of the seas!
Direct me now; me wisdom give this hour.
He sleepeth yet, nor sign of waking shows.
Upon his breast these earrings I will place;
They bear deep 'graved some talismanic words,
In Egypt cut by a magician wise;
From Ishmaelitish trader they were bought.
My mother said they potency possess
To shield from evil things who them doth wear.
He waketh not. Now I will Zora call;
For woman's mind, in sudden need, doth act
With sudden speed, and surer far, than men,
Who often lengthy councils hold, then act
On straight-drawn lines with no account for chance.

Zora.

Delilah! Samson! wake! for many men
 This place surround; men arm'd as if for war.
 And now they trample down the thick-set fence,
 And hither come in numbers great! Look! See!
 With them that soldier is who yester eve
 Was here. He knoweth Samson's here, and seeks
 To seize him unaware. Wake! Samson, wake!

Delilah.

Zora, not news thine information is.
 I've seen and marked all thou hast told,
 And thee to call was mine intent. He sleeps.
 List thou to me: This night a deed I've done
 That threat'neth ruin dire on him and me.
 While he thro' wine was foolish in his speech,
 A story strange he unto me did tell
 About his hair. He said his strength would stay
 No longer than his hair unshorn should grow.
 But if the plaited masses once were cut
 From off his head, then he'd become as weak
 As other men, and of no more effect.
 And then asleep he fell; and while he slept,
 The curling tresses of his hair all coiled
 Serpent-like over him, I gazed on them;
 They seemed to beckon unto me; my hand
 Went forth; I raised those tresses to my lips;
 I kissed them; then great argument began
 Of this, and that, to one point leading all.
 While thinking, at my feet did noiseless fall
 The seven braids of Samson's hair, shorn off.
 Too late I knew what I had done. I fear
 That Nazaritish vow that he betrayed
 Was more than first I thought. What shall be done?

Zora.

Hark! Listen! Too late it is for council now.
 Into the house the soldiers soon will come,
 And they this room will surely search. Be quick!
 Hide thou that heap of hair; then Samson 'rouse,
 While I go strive the soldiers to deceive.
 Make him go forth; he may escape them yet.

Delilah.

Too late! Too late! They hitherward now come,
 With rush impetuous grown heady, strong,
 For that they have with no resistance met.
 Wake! Samson, wake! Thou must not longer sleep.
 The Philistines are on thee now! Awake!
 Thou art betrayed, and they thy life now seek!

Samson.

What means this noise? What words are these I hear?
 The Philistines, thou saith, are on me now.
 Thou'st cried me that before; and I do think
 The jest is waxing weak with too much use.
 Ah, now I do hear a noise like angry men,
 And close they are at hand. I must arise,
 And make them welcome here. Ah, here doth lie
 My mappet, my good mace; I'll crack the skulls
 Of all that here can ever come. What's this?
 About my loins a weakness is; my head
 Is light, and myriads of motes now dance
 Before mine eyes. This mace I scarce can lift,
 Which yesterday was as a feather light.
 I tremble; I am weak, yes, very weak.
 Why am I thus? Ah! what is this? My God!
 My hair, my hair, from off my head is shorn!
 Speak, woman!—tell me who hath done this thing;

And yet I need not ask, nor answer need.
 'Twas thou. With foul intent thou mad'st me drunk,
 And lured me on to whisper in thine ears
 The secret of my Nazaritish vow,
 And swift hath called some lover, thine of old,
 That thou into his hands may'st me betray.
 My life thou'st sold to make some other great.
 Speak not; I know thee now, and will not hear.
 A fairer thing ne'er came in human form
 To lure a man to death and to disgrace.
 A viler deed by woman ne'er was done.

Delilah.

My love, my lord, thy deep reproach I've earned,
 And yet I have not thee betrayed, nor could,
 To any man for love, nor yet for gold.
 Thy life is of mine own integrant part.
 So, if thy life from thee was ta'en away,
 My days would come to end. Do what thou wilt.
 Reproach me; cast me from thy path away;
 Trample me 'neath thy feet. Here is a knife;
 Take it, and in this breast which now I bare
 Plunge it deep. See, the red blood leapeth up
 In readiness to outward rush when thou
 Dost strike. No pain this knife can give
 Like that great pain those words of thine inflict.
 God-like thou cam'st to me, with god-like strength;
 And having loved a god, I love no man.
 Now, as the gods give life and death to all,
 Give thou me death, and let me go my way.

Samson.

Hush! Rest thy rapid tongue. Too vile thou art
 For me to kill. Like the dread asp who lurks
 In secret places in the walls wert thou.

Thou a way didst find to creep into my brain,
 And there didst lurk and writhe and wind about
 'Till all its secret places were explored;
 Then, gliding forth, thy venomous sting hath turned
 Against the place where once thou found'st a nest.
 Hence! Go thou hence! To me return no more.

Zora.

Cease strife! I thought that thou wert gone! Too late
 It is to now thyself attempt to hide.
 Sit down, nor aught resistance make. 'Tis thus
 Alone thy life can now be saved. Soldier,
 Come in. The chamber of the women now
 Is open unto thee. Enter and search.

Officer.

Unto this house I've been before, and found
 A kindly welcome here, tho' then I came
 In other guise, yet not unknown to those
 Who kept the house. The cause that brought me then
 Doth bring me now. I come not now alone
 As first I came, for much I feared strong force
 Must needs be used as key where once I hoped
 A softer thing might win. I come to seek
 For him whom I did think within this house
 I'd find, as I'd been told. Almost I feel
 That I do violence where none is need.
 Not thus is Samson wont his foes to meet;
 And if I find him not, I have but made
 A mighty stir, and all without event.
 What man is he who on yon couch doth lie?
 Methinks thou lack'st not mates, my pretty birds.
 I wonder much the cock doth keep away,
 And leave strange fowls to gather up his hens.
 But hold! Throw ope that door. Soldiers, come in;

These women seize, for here a trap's been set;
 And if yon man attempt doth make to rise
 From off that couch, on them then use thy swords ;
 For yonder she me with her life assured
 That here no unlooked danger I would find.

Delilah.

Oh ! list to me. No hidden danger's here.
 This night we, women-like, have entertained
 A passing guest, and he too much hath drunk.
 Disturb him not. That man for whom thou seek'st
 Came not, and thus him to repay we've done.

Officer.

'Tis well. Arise thou from the couch, and tell
 Thy name, and where thy dwelling-place doth lie.

Samson.

Men call me Samson. Manoah's son am I—
 A Nazarite, and Judge in Israel—
 Who to a harlot did a secret tell
 When she had made me drunk with wine and love.
 And as I held Jehovah's will at naught,
 I vows did violate which sacred were.
 And she the vantage having won, now laughs
 At that poor fool who for a harlot's kiss
 Hath sold the trust Jehovah gave to him.
 Eloi ! My God ! If thro' mine act doth fall
 Upon the Name aught that may make it light
 Unto the heathen's ears, then let me die.

Officer.

I know thee well. Speak thou no further now.
 Seize him, soldiers ; chain him with weighty chains,
 That he may not escape ; his cunning's great.

This talk to God doth have an empty sound.
 Thro' men in our land no god hath wrought
 Such deeds as have by Samson been performed.

Delilah.

Oh! take him not from me. There is much gold,
 And jewels here. He's rich; his father, too.
 A ransom large we'll pay to thee if thou
 Wilt set him free. He's mad, and he is drunk.
 This is not Samson. See how short his hair;
 And Samson's hair is long; he drinks no wine.

Samson.

Thine idle clamor cease, false woman, vile.
 Had not mine eyes, mine ears, and senses all
 Been lost I'd not thus easy been betrayed.
 My life the forfeit is; so lead me hence.
 "If I had thought" doth follow "I have done"
 Too far behind; and so too late we learn.

Officer.

Unto this house no more wilt thou return.
 Go hence in peace, nor anger take with thee.

Delilah.

Say not so; but yester eve thou said'st to me,
 "His life I'll save if I him captive make."
 And for the kind intent which thou didst have,
 Thou said'st, "With deeds as good I will repay."
 Give me his life, and all I have is thine.

Officer.

As I have said, so will I do for thee.
 Take Samson hence unto the prison place
 In Azzah. Keep him chained and guarded well;
 And tho' it seems his strength departed hath,

To make his weakness new still more secure,
 Bore out his eyes, that he no more may see.
 Unto the lords and princes I will go,
 And make account of what this morn I've done.
 And in the days to come, when men do talk
 Of Samson and his mighty deeds of strength,
 My name in many lands shall loudly sound.
 After this day we'll drive him forth, and show
 Unto the people who will gather 'round
 The lion chained and turned into an ape.
 Our god, great Dagon, once again will smile;
 And that one, whom the Hebrews God do call,
 To men a mockery shall now become.

Delilah.

He's gone! He's gone! What horrid thing was that
 The captain bade them do? Bore out his eyes?—
 Dig out those eyes, so soft and full of love?—
 Shut out from him the light yon god doth give?—
 Make him to see no more the bright, glad earth?—
 To cloak him in a mantle black for life?—
 Oh! horrid thought! Oh! deed more horrid still!
 Samson! Samson! Come back, my love, to me.
 Let me read once more within those eyes of thine
 The tale of love which I so oft have read.
 Drink from mine eyes the light that in them is—
 That light which lives in them for thee alone;
 And when the darkness clothes thee 'round about,
 Then may the light of mine eyes shine for thee.
 Blind! Blind! Alas! the blind can see no more;
 And I have robbed thy strength and made thee blind.

Zora.

This excess of grief doth naught of good avail.
 By his own fault this end was wrought; for he

Is man, and thou a woman art ; he strong—
 Thou weak. Then he hath lived beyond that time
 When blood doth all command reject, and leaps
 With hotness 'neath a woman's smile. And then,
 Who having lived to man's full years doth do
 A thing which he before hath never done,
 And sworn to never do, is for that deed
 And consequent effect held fully bound.
 His Nazaritish bonds forbade him wine,
 And yet he drank when thou but asked him once,
 And drank again, and drank to drunkenness ;
 Then told to thee what was not right to tell.
 A woman thou, and full of that disease
 Called curiosity—woman's own disease.
 And thou this curiosity to cure
 Didst do what he had bade thee not to do.
 Not thou, but he himself to blame for this.

Delilah.

Zora, if we some child a rose would give,
 From off the stem we cut the thorns away,
 Lest they might prick, and turn the rose to pain.
 My grief is not so light that words can heal ;
 Yet if through sympathy thou findest words
 Must come as gifts to me, oh ! clear the thorns
 Away ; for thy reproaching him doth pierce
 Me through and through. My love! Oh! my lost love!

Zora.

Now, pardon me. I meant not thee to wound.
 All may not yet be lost. His life is safe.
 He may escape, and in some aftertime
 Thou'l win him back. He'll to thy side return,
 Be thou of that assured. He loved thee once ;
 And when a man a woman once doth love,

Until her place some other woman takes
 He still will think and dream of her; he'll long
 To see her face and hear her voice; and then,
 Because his thoughts so dwell with her, his love
 Doth firmer grow, and she more dear becomes.
 The young can loose and bind their loves more swift.
 The man or woman who doth learn to love
 When years have made them wise in other things,
 Not easy change. Thy love will come again.

Delilah.

No more. Ah! never more. From me he's gone.
 As topmost clouds do by their drifting show
 The path of coming winds, tho' present wind
 Contrary way doth blow, so doth this wind
 Which just hath blown from me with angry howl
 The man I love another wind foretell.
 I hear it now, with ears prophetic grown.
 Death and disaster cometh with it, too.
 This day between the gods great wars begin;
 Or Dagon, or Jehovah—one must fall.
 God of my fathers! Man of my love!
 Ye both may fall, and I have hurled ye down!

Zora.

Hark! A great noise there is in Azzah now.
 'Tis bruit abroad that Samson captive is,
 And men rejoicing great will make for that.

Delilah.

Come thou with me. I'll to the city go,
 And win my way unto his side, that I
 May him again behold and hear his voice.
 And if his life they take, I too will die,
 And make of all such end as should be made.

Zora.

Here we, for such a space as may be need,
 Must separate. Thou to the city hence,
 While I will down the valley go, and wait
 For thee to come unto me there. A home
 I'll have for thee when thou a home dost need.
 My friend, come to me then; thou'l welcome be.
 And if no more we meet, be thou assured
 My friendship will not weaker grow for that.
 True friendship, like the little circle born
 Of pebble into sleeping water cast,
 Doth ever grow and ever wider spread;
 Each broad'ning wave effect of the impact
 Of that small circle of the pebble born—
 Not the same wave, but child of that first cause.
 And so, my friend, the circle of my love
 Embraceth thee wherever thou may'st go,
 And wider grows as thou for me hast need.
 Farewell, and may sweet peace soon smile on thee.

Delilah.

Farewell, oh! my friend; we'll meet no more;
 No more shall we roam in Sorek's sweet vale.
 Farewell to ye, oh! my gardens, farewell.
 The grapes on the vine shall ripen and fall;
 The fig-trees put forth their blossom in vain;
 No more shall I pluck the fruits of my land.
 Farewell to thee, oh! my house; I will take
 Thy latch-keys away; I'll use them no more.
 Farewell, oh! ye beds, where my love hath lain;
 Thy hangings no more he'll unfold; the dust
 O'er them will descend. No more thy perfume
 His nostrils will glad—thy savor is gone.

The asp and adder will nest in thee now.
Now ruin shall dwell in the place once made glad
By the songs that we sang—the songs that told
Of the love of Delilah, of Sorek's vale,
And Samson, the Judge, whom a harlot betrayed.

PART VII.

WHERE MANY PART.

Samson.

Here let me rest, nor farther lead me on.
The time too swift will come when I must go
Unto the grinding-place, there to remain
Until this form, which once all men did fear,
Thro' work laborious, and all unused,
And wearing chains—a load too great to bear—
Shall lifeless fall upon the prison floor,
To thence be cast away as thing unclean ;—
Hated by all, and feared, alas ! by none.
When they those palaces first dig'd away,
Wherein fair Light did sit and hold his court,
I thought that I in darkness then must grope—
A darkness deep beyond the realm of light.
But now, alas ! I find it is not so.
Not darkness this, but light illuminant—
Ignescient light, and fraught with killing pain.
And ever thro' the place where thought doth dwell
Lances of flame are thrust like those that pierce
The clouds that gather over mountains high ;
And oft these flames are quenched in the red seas
Which ever roll, and beat, tempestuous, mad—
Lashed into fury by the winds of pain.
And when I think the storm is nearly past,
With wrath recuperate again are hurled

New spears of light which shiver in my brain.
Dazzled with light am I; yes, too much light.
Yet I am blind. No form for me exists.
Within is flame, but no light enters more.
But soon those inner eyes will grow—those eyes
Through which we backward look. I'll see again
The things that I have lost—the things that seemed
So little worth when I with sense of sight
Beheld. Now they are lost; they will become
Nursed in the arms of Memory so strong;
They'll goad me till I cry aloud for death.
Death! Why should I for his coming wait? Why
Should I the pain and suff'ring bear?—the tears,
The yearning, and the great unrest of life?
Why longer on the edge of that abyss
O'er which at last we all must leap stand I?
On this side I know all; the thither side
No man doth know, or ever can, until
He crosses o'er; and he comes back no more.
He cannot speak; his mouth with dust is stopped.
Then, wherefore dread? Why not the leap now make?—
And by that leap make short the dreary path
O'er which I else must creep unto the grave?
God's anger dreads me not. E'en tho' I lived
Beyond allotted time of man, I know
Not if the sins I've done in years agone
Would thro' long future years less gross become
Because that I the power have lost more sin
To do. And who from sin doth cease because
He must, and not for that he wills, doth naught.
If, therefore, I to God have given offense
When strength, and all that makes life good, was mine,
I cannot now, when I am weak and blind,
Seek that which I have never sought before—

Mercy and pity from mine outraged God.
 But who can prove I God have e'er defied?
 He who hath marked me with a burning brand,
 In the time foregone; He who hath foredoom'd
 All men before the seed was yet conceived
 Of that first parent tree from which men spring,—
 He either all doth rule, else nothing rules at all.
 And as blind chance doth no part rule in man,
 We still must think the laws of life are right.
 Yet why should not I die, and thus for me
 The mystery of mysteries solve? I then
 The sealed could for myself unseal, and find
 What sage and fool make argument about.
 And yet the event I must not haste, but wait
 Until the time doth come when in the chain
 Whose links are human lives a new link's formed,
 Adapted to my place. No right have I
 By stroke of violence to mar the incomplete,
 And be the cause of unforeseen effects.

Officer.

Now move thou on; no longer must we bide,
 For hither comes a band of men; and tho'
 The intent of their coming I know not,
 Precaution's wisdom's tool. The princes wait
 In Dagon's temple now. They wish to see
 Thee, Samson, blind and weak—yet not so weak
 But thou canst yet amaze with strengthful feats
 The common man. Now, onward we will go.

Manoah.

An old man, captain, bent with years and grief,
 Cries unto thee a favor small to grant;
 Let me but speak a few short words with him
 Who, weighted down with chains, doth yonder stand.

Officer.

Who art thou? And what these men who with thee come?
Speak plain, and true, nor think me to deceive.

Manoah.

Men of Dan are these, from Eshtaol come
Yon man to see. Manoah, I—father old
Of him in chains. May I now with him speak?

Officer.

If thine intent be peaceable, thou may'st.
Be brief, and let thy brethren distant keep,
Nor near approach to him, my pris'ner there.
Suspicion is the foul bird that often cleans
Carrión, cunning, from our paths away.

Manoah.

As thou dost bid, so shall be done. Men of Dan,
The father to the son may speak, and he
Alone. Wait thou, and I intelligence will bring
Of all that I may learn to thee. Wait thou.

Samson.

The voice of my father smites mine ears.
The poor old man whose head the storms have beat
For many years his son to see hath come.
I must be brave, nor weakness show to him.

Manoah.

Samson, my son, in fair Eshtaol
Is heard now the sound of weeping and woe,
For the news of thy fall hath hurt us sore,
Though nothing we know of what hath foregone.
As a tale starteth forth in diff'rent robes

Than those which it wears at the journey's end,
 Speak thou now, and tell what was thine offense
 Which God doth avenge in manner like this.

Samson.

With women I played in the night, my sire,
 And I drank strong wine, which foolish did make.
 My tongue it was loosed; I secrets did tell;
 In a harlot's lap my head I laid down;
 I lifted it sheared—she had me betrayed!

Manoah.

My son! my son! what ending this for thee.
 Thou whom Jehovah in the sealed womb
 Didst separate from all the tribe of Dan
 To spread abroad the power of His name,
 And make the heart of the heathen to fear
 His might—what hast thou done, oh! my son?
 Oh! my son! the Name is brought down by thee.

Samson.

Rebuke me not, oh! my father! Not I
 Alone to blame; for Jehovah selected
 And set me apart, yet gave me not strength
 Myself to control. Tho' strong were mine arms,
 But weak was my head; I fell into sin.
 Still, tho' I've betrayed my God and myself,
 And the penalty pay for the sins I've done,
 There burneth within assurance to me
 The time is to come when the will of God
 Manifested will be in a different way
 From what thou hast thought—from what I have wrought.
 Who ordained the first, ordaineth the last.
 The last act must be ordained from the first.

Manoah.

Is thy soul as blind as thine eyes, my son?
 Hadst thou turned to God in thy time of need,
 Not weak had'st thou been, but newly refreshed.
 But I come not here to talk of the past.
 With me here have come some brethren of Dan;
 A ransom we'll pay to these men for thee.
 What weight of gold will purchase thy life?

Samson.

Gold they will not; mine offense is too great;
 My life they have spared to bring me more low.
 Until the time comes which endeth my life,
 At the grindstones, in chains, blind, I will work—
 A slave unto slaves I'll be kept. No more
 'Neath the skies free and erect shall I stand.
 Unto my brethren in Dan bear my thanks
 For the will they have my freedom to buy,
 And tell them thro' pride and vanity came
 The fall they now see. Who knoweth the end?
 Tho' God I have blamed, all yet may work out
 To a glorious close for Him and for me.

Manoah.

The God of thy fathers hath never lied.
 His will He conceals for a time, and then
 His hand He shoots out, and the victory's won.
 In Him is thy trust; on Him now rely.

Officer.

Part now with him, old man, thy time is passed.
 In Dagon's temple Philistia's princes wait
 Thy son to greet. I have been kind to thee;
 Thy God inform; for me it may be good.

Think not thy son in any danger is;
His life is safe. Now go; depart in peace.

Manoah.

The God of our fathers keep with thee, my son.
He spreadeth His mantle over thee now.
He'll light to thee send to guide thee the way.
Now, walk thou thy path dependent on Him.
I'll leave thee now, and to the princes go.
After this day of rejoicing is o'er,
For the son the father may plead not in vain.
Lift up thy voice to thy God, my son.

Samson.

The sound of thy words fall into my soul.
My father, now go. God smile upon thee.

Chorus.

Weep! oh children of Dan!
Thy pride is brought low.
See thy God-given man
In the hands of thy foe.

The hearts of the heathen rejoice; now ye no comfort shall know.

Manoah.

Hope! oh children of Dan!
Unto thy God now cry.
His mercy will span
Unto whom He doth try.

In the furnace of sorrow and pain, He burneth to purify.

Chorus.

Weep! oh children of Dan!
Thy strength is now flown;
Despoiled is the plan
The Builder built on.

Thy house is torn down to the ground; the foundation thereof is gone.

Manoah.

Hope! oh children of Dan!
 Who hath His will foreknown?
 Who can foretell the plan
 The Builder builds on?

Before the beginning of time, He wrought the end He
 knoweth alone.

Chorus.

Weep! oh children of Dan!
 His birth was foretold
 Not by the tongue of man;
 No womb did him hold

When the angel came to the barren wife the will of God
 to unfold.

Manoah.

Hope! oh children of Dan!
 God doth His tools select.
 Wisdom is not in man;
 God's wisdom ye reject.

His wisdom ruleth all things right; 'gainst Him no walls
 erect.

Chorus.

Weep! oh children of Dan!
 Now fallen's thy chief.
 Now low lies the man
 The crown of thy sheaf.
 His strength hath departed and gone; he's fallen as falls
 the leaf.

Manoah.

Hope! oh children of Dan!
 Hard tread the feet of God.
 Not like the feet of man—
 With iron He's shod.

He trampleth the seed in the ground; He winnoweth what
 He hath trod.

Chorus.

Weep ! oh children of Dan !
 But not in despair.
 God punisheth man,
 His might to declare.

Yet He weigheth for each his load—not greater than he
 can bear.

Mantua.

Ye men of Dan, seek ye again your houses,
 While I unto the lords and princes now
 Will go. And if with gold I can them tempt,
 When I return my son with me I'll bring
 Unto fair Eshtaoל, his boyhood home.
 Doth he, for his great sins, his life forfeit,
 Unto that sepulchre I'll bring him, then,
 Where sleep his fathers all—where he must sleep.

Officer.

The men of Dan are gone, but here comes one;
 For Ashtoreth I'll bide a little while.
 While serving Dagon, I must not forget
 'Tis much the smiles of Ashtoreth to win;
 And Ashtoreth these lovers hath in hand.

Samson.

Captain of the guard, now my father's gone,
 I ready am, nor longer need to rest.
 This fresh, sweet air invigorates me much.
 These days of pain have brought me nigh to death.
 The time hath slowly passed. One week hath seemed
 More years to me than it did days contain;
 And memory doth crown sore pain with pain.

PART VIII.

HIS LOVE WAS WEAK.

Officer.

Hither swift approaches one whose wish I know.
We'll wait for her; she fain would speak with thee.
This day I know for thee doth end all joy.
The cost is naught, so I'll be kind to thee.
And as the soldier hand in hand with death
Doth march, 'tis fit with all the gods we friends
Should be. Unto thy gods remember me.

Samson.

Now it doth seem the alley-ways of sound
Far wider opened are than when the sense
Of sight was mine. Methinks I hear the fall
Of footsteps which familiar are to me.
And while they smite upon mine ears, it seems
They sight restore, and I that face behold
That once hath come between my God and me.
Delilah draweth nigh. I feel her now.

Officer.

What thou hast said is true. Yes, she is here.
Speak thou with him, nor make thy converse long.
Love babblings are not meet for such as he.
Samson, Delilah stands beside thee now.

Samson.

The nostrils of my soul do smell her out,
And would reject; he likes her not so near.

Woman, how comest thou to me?—Arrayed
 In garments fine and ornaments of price,
 And precious spicery, to make thee smell
 Of treachery and baseness dark and deep?

Delilah.

Not so come I, my lord. Upon the ground
 I sit; my feet are covered; mine hair is loosed.
 No ornaments wear I save pearls of woe.
 My spicery is earth upon my head
 And stains upon my cheeks. I cry, "Alas!
 "Alas! for him!" My garments I have rent,
 My veil I've dyed. When in the public place
 I sit, who passeth by doth say, "She weeps
 "And cries, alas! for that her spouse is dead."

Samson.

'Tis sad, this grief of thine; and men do say—
 "She weeps and wails for that her spouse is dead;"
 But we who better know not thus will say.
 She weeps and wails, and widowhood doth claim,
 We'll say, so men who know her not may thus
 To pity her be made, that they may fall
 Into her net, so she more blood may drink.

Delilah.

Oh! speak not thus to me, my lord, my life;
 Nor let thy mind such bastard thoughts conceive.
 No life apart from thee can I now live.
 And tho' what now thou art may be my blame,
 Effect it is of act without intent.
 When in that moment I the thought conceived
 To test if what thou unto me hadst told
 When wine had wisdom from thy brain cast out,
 I with myself great argument did make.

I questioned first if thou the truth hadst told.
 If truth it was, then reason strong 'twould be
 Why I thy will should disobey, that .I
 Might bind thee closer unto me; and so
 The resolution came, followed by act.
 Trait'rous was I to thy great trust, and yet
 I doubted then if I thy trust had won.
 I seek thee now in garb of mourning drest;
 And here beneath thy feet I sit, my lord.
 I offer thee my life; thy slave I'll be;
 Thy guide; thy staff. Oh! thou forgiveness grant
 For that mad act which tore support away
 From my life's house. Forgive me, oh! my lord!

Samson.

'Tis ever thus the injured must forgive,
 And to the injurious one reward extend,
 Because the injured, by decision strange
 Of men, a standard far more high should bear
 Than he who by some trait'rous word or deed
 Hath wrought so much of sorrow, pain, and loss.
 Oh! 'tis unjust! Woman, I bid thee go!
 Enjoy thy lover and thy blood-stained gold!
 When thou to me my sight can't give again,
 Forgiveness ask, and I may then forgive.

Delilah.

Samson, now list to me. Thy reason's wrong.
 'Tis not because the injured higher stand
 That men from them do more expect, but 'tis
 For who a wrong doth do doth suffer more
 Than who a wrong receives. Again I swear
 I have not thee for gold betrayed. When men
 Gold offered me to bring thee to their nets,
 To them I gave but scorn for their attempts.

When priests with threats of angry gods assailed,
 At gods I have defiance hurled; but when,
 Led on by oft-deceived and curious thoughts,
 I found an open gate, I entered in,
 And having entered, could no more return.

Samson.

Now, woman, thou dost lie. I plainly see
 What to the open sense of sight was dark.
 Thou hast my strength assayed before; and I,
 With that assurance born of strength and love,
 Held it light jest, and thus myself betrayed.
 Leave me, nor with thy presence longer grieve.
 There is within me that strange heat which tells
 Of coming impulse, which I fear may drive
 Me with unwilling hand to do thee harm.
 False art thou now; false thou hast ever been.

Delilah.

Pitiless one, I'll plead with thee no more.
 When in the by-gone time thou first me sought,
 'Tis true I strove thee to betray, for I
 A daughter of Philistia am, and thou
 Her enemy. My country and my gods
 Both urged me on, and gold was mine to win;
 But after came sweet love. Country and gods
 Forgotten were, and, woman-like, I thought,
 With thoughts of self-love born, thy love I'd won.
 'Tis thus who love too oft themselves deceive.
 I've wronged thee; deeply wronged, but not betrayed.
 Forgiveness I have prayed, and thou refused;
 And now I know that thou me never loved,
 And also know that thou dost hate me now
 With hate that gods alone are said to feel.
 Though that faint spark of love which once illumed

Thy heart for me is quenched in floods of hate,
 Not thee I'll hate, nor leave thee now alone.
 To Dagon's temple I with thee will go,
 Where lords and princes holiday now keep.
 Despite of thee, I'll claim thee as mine own;
 And for reward for that which I have done,
 And yet will pledge to do, me thee they'll give
 In chains; in chains I'll keep thee, and be thy slave.

Samson.

The woman's mad; her brain doth idle thoughts
 Bring forth. But if she's mad, 'tis love drives on.
 So leave her go. Samson blind—harlot mad—
 Will make in years to come a tale of mirth
 Thro' all Philistian lands when it is told.

Officer.

She thitherward hath gone; move thou too on.
 The hour is past when we expected were.
 How dost thou feel since now thy love hath gone?

Samson.

Like one who finds what seems a jewel rare,
 Which he in hands expert doth place to learn
 That it is flawed and valueless to all
 Thro' having been by careless hands exposed
 To too much heat. If found before by fire
 'Twas flawed, the love this woman hath for me
 Had been to me a priceless jewel rare;
 But now, 'tis only pain and deep regret.
 Her load is heavier for her to bear
 Than mine for me. I've wronged her much, I fear;
 I wish that I had granted her her prayer.
 What noise is that I hear? Where now are we?

Officer.

The noise is that of many men who cry
 Encouragement to one who hath performed
 Some feat of strength or skill which great doth seem.
 We rapidly draw nigh to Dagon's door.
 When thou dost enter there, a shout thou'l hear
 Will have more sound of joy than all before.
 Philistia's sons great joy this day do make;
 Thy God Jehovah lieth low thro' thee.

Samson.

Out of the mouth of the heathen now fall
 Words of rebuking to me, oh, my God!
 Now rejoicing they make, and boastings loud,
 And their god they lift up before thy face—
 Their god made by hands of things of the earth—
 That epicene one in their folly conceived;
 They bow down their heads to the man and fish;
 The heathen now raves, oh, God, of thy fall!
 They see in me but the downfall of thee;
 In the darkness of pride they call thee naught.
 Eloi! My God! let my punishment come;
 Bear me down, break my back with the weight thereof;
 Yet ere I fall, work thy will upon them.
 As thou didst me send thy purpose to do,
 Jehovah, I cry, lead thou me the way.

Officer.

I'll lead thee now; when I have done, thy God
 May lead thee where he wills, now thou art blind.
 The way thou canst not find without some help.
 Come; now we enter Dagon's temple door.
 Strive thou to-day the princes here to please,
 And they may deign thy lot to make less hard.
 Delilah, too, is here; so make her proud.

P A R T . I X .

GOD'S HAND REVEALED.

Chorus of Philistines.

Be glad,
Ye princes!
Be glad, ye priests !
Sing with loud voices,
And make sacrifices
Unto Philistia's gods !
Let thy joy to the seas go forth !
Make it known to all the glad earth—
Now hath he fallen thy mightiest foe ;
His strength hath departed, his pride is brought low.
Oh ! sing ye aloud glad songs, and make mirth
In all of thy lands, the south and north ;
'Neath our feet Jehovah we've trod.
We've destroyed his high places,
Now Dagon rejoices.
Be glad, ye priests !
Ye princes,
Be glad !
Rejoice,
Ye people !
Women, rejoice !
Ye of past ages,
And ye who have trembled
When his war-cry resounded,

Rejoice ! No more need ye fear him ;
 We've captive him made ; he's chained and blind.
 Low lies the God of the Hebrew to-day,
 And high stands the god whom the great seas obey.
 Samson for life at the mills shall grind.
 Can his God go there to cheer him ?
 His God is now confounded !
 Ye princes assembled,
 See how he rages !
 With a loud voice,
 Ye people,
 Rejoice !

Dagon !
 Oh ! Sea God !
 Great god of all,
 Thou art our ruler.
 Thy people come to thee
 In this time of rejoicing
 With off'rings rich for thine altar.
 Oh ! take them, High God, to thy pleasure.
 The God of the stranger is now cast down.
 On thy people, oh ! Dagon, no more now frown.
 Fill their nets once again with rich treasure.
 No more, oh ! Dagon, they'll falter ;
 Their vows thy priests are voicing ;
 They kneel now unto thee,
 To thee, great ruler,
 To thee they call,
 Oh ! Sea God !
 Dagon !

Officer.

Lords and princes, ye potent men, behold
 Samson, the man of Eshtaol, the great

Of old ; but now that he is blind, not more
 To dread than b'other beast that once have raged,
 Until some huntsman caught and chained him down.
 He with some unknown power was leagued we know.
 The strength which he doth even now possess
 Is more than any man hath ever owned
 Save he. Much I mislike his chains to break ;
 But as I have command from ye to do,
 I will obey. By this strong guard surround,
 He'll quick be bound again if he doth show
 Resolve to harm ye people gathered here.
 These weights and bars and heavy stones, here placed
 Ye to amuse, he'll break, and cast, and bend,
 As others feather-weighted things can use.
 His chains strike off, and set him here all free.
 Now, Samson, work thy will, while we watch thee.

Samson.

Ye I this day obey, nor yet know why.
 Ye, who my God outrage and me insult,
 Naught more could do to me if I refused
 Than take my life—a life but little worth ;
 And still, as life I have, and know not yet
 The destined end for which I came, nor know
 What part I'll play ere comes that destined end,
 I'll not resist, but blindly stagger on
 Until the gates by God's own hands are oped.
 I'm ready, now. Oh ! God, guide thou my hands,
 That I may do what thou hast foreordained.

Semi-Chorus.

See him ; now the weight he hurls ;
 How it flieth from his hand ;
 High and far and swiftly whirls,
 As before the East whirls sand.

See him bend, and toss, and shift
 Here and there that massive bar !
 Not another man could lift
 Such a weight, and cast so far.

Now he raiseth yon great stone
 Twenty oxen might not stir ;
 Yet he lifteth it alone,
 And he hurls it—hear it whir!

Now he smites it with his hand,
 And it crumbleth 'neath the blow ;
 Look ! He breaks that iron band !
 No exertion doth he show.

Ah ! what is this other test ?
 See, they drive ten oxen in ;
 Surely this will prove the best ;
 'Round about him ropes they spin.

Now he grasbeth yon great chain ;
 The drivers shout, the oxen move ;
 All their efforts are in vain—
 He for them too strong doth prove.

Ah ! a change comes o'er him now ;
 They have set him free once more ;
 Read the anguish on his brow—
 He doth now for rest implore.

Officer.

Princes and priests, and ye, oh, mighty lords,
 The man doth crave for rest. He is no god,
 Else had he wrought some great revenge this day.
 Yet harken unto me, ye people all :
 What he hath been, we all too well do know ;

What now he is, he unto us hath shown ;
 What time may make him yet, who can discern ?
 So while this day ye are assembled here,
 'Twere well if ye would consultation hold
 What way is best this man to safely keep.
 When ye conclusion make, instruct me then.
 This day's display of strength I much mislike.

Priest of Dagon.

Our gods now claim this man. The whole land cries
 That he no longer shall by sorcery
 Threat all our peace. Death holds the one sure key
 To lock the doors, that he fare forth no more.
 He but dissembleth now ; his cunning's great.
 That evil principle which in him lives
 Is garmented from me in thin disguise.
 As he Philistian lands hath long harassed,
 And slain her children by the thousand-fold,
 'Tis just his life shall now atonement make—
 Not for that he hath harried us in war—
 The gods love war ; on warriors they smile—
 But he hath killed our men thro' magic dark,
 And he is leagued with that strange Hebrew God
 Whom some Jehovah call, El Shaddai some—
 God Almighty or Jehovah, matters not.
 The God is one—the name naught signifies.
 Our gods are mightier far than He ;
 And so this tool of gods to us unknown
 Hath edgeless now become. But in the mills
 Those gods again may their dulled tool make sharp ;
 'Tis best that we this broken metal cast
 Into the furnace fire, that it may melt
 Before 'tis beat again into a sword,
 Or new edge take—it then too late may be.

Lords and princes, and all ye people, hear !
 Dagon doth Samson claim ! Who will dispute ?
 Our sacrificial altar fires burn ;
 The smoke therefrom ascends with no sweet smell.
 In Ammon, Molech's fires with richness burn,
 And Moab's Chemosh ne'er hath hungered yet.
 Shall Dagon, then, for off'rings call in vain ?
 The priest hath asked : what answer will ye give ?
 Thy god awaits. What will ye send to him ?

Chorus.

Oh ! priest,
 He is thine ;
 Unto Dagon
 We send him thro' thee.
 Pour his blood out like wine ;
 Let the hot flames refine.
 Slay him, oh ! priest !
 Fit off'ring he'll be
 Unto Dagon ;
 Unto Dagon we send him thro' thee.
 Now take him, oh ! priest !
 He shall die ! He shall die !

Priest.

Now shall Philistia flourish once again ;
 Now Dagon smiles and stretcheth forth his hand.
 Oh ! ye people, strong is the Great Sea's God ;
 Fecund is he with fruits of land and sea.
 His fatness now he poureth out for us.
 Mighty were we before the Hebrew came.
 All our high places they made desolate,
 And of our gods a mockery they made.
 Our fathers weak became, and so they fell ;
 But we who followed, trusting in our gods,

Have hurled the Hebrew forth, our lands regained,
 And mighty are once more; no more we'll fall.
 The God of the Hebrew now we defy.
 Who knoweth Him? Of what is He compact?
 Who can His dwelling-place unto us show?
 Oh! ye people, our God is with us here!
 Let the sacrifice wait till all is prepared.
 Be glad, ye princes! Ye people, be glad!

Delilah.

Princes and lords, now harken unto me,
 And ye my people, listen to my words:
 Knowledge have I of what ye all must hear.
 Into thy hands this man I have betrayed,
 For that this weakness I in him have wrought,
 As I to Dagon made a vow to do.
 I claim this man for but a little space,
 And after, I will lead him here again;
 And if ye then a sacrifice will make,
 Thro' me thine off'ring purified will be.
 Until thro' me our god hath worked his will,
 His nostrils will the altar's smoke reject.
 Offend ye now the gods no more thro' him.
 The woman speaks, but not with woman's words.

Officer.

I have unto this woman promise made,
 If I should Samson take, his life I'd save.
 Too late I know 'twas promise ill-conceived;
 Too dangerous is he in any state to live;
 And yet, as I to Ashtoreth made vow,
 If she to my emprise her aid would give—
 For that these twain had loved each other long—
 To them I'd grant all things which might be meet.
 My vow was heard, and Samson now is ours.

So I unto this woman fain would give
 Some little time, that she from him may part
 As who doth love should part—not sudden-wise
 And unforeseen—but, as if one would go
 Upon a journey long, and knowing not
 What may betide ere he returneth home,
 Prepareth all, and goes his way in peace.
 But she hath lied; she gave to me no aid,
 Nor did she Samson unto us betray.
 The gods have done what man could never do.
 Unto the gods I fain would keep my vow.

Priest.

As thou dost ask that thou thy vow may'st keep,
 The woman may with him some converse hold.
 Lead her unto the man; here let them part;
 Samson fareth from the temple forth no more.
 Dead loved ones bind the living unto gods;
 Dead faith by death hath often been reborn.
 She once was false, his death may make her true;
 So let them speak, and thou canst do no more.

Officer.

Samson, death is nigh; and after we are dead,
 Nor love, nor hate, can find us any more;
 Therefore I bid thee treat the woman kind.
 The dead no afterthought can have we know,—
 'Tis those who live must suffer worse than death
 The bitter pangs of unforgiven wrongs.
 And as when we into that couch descend
 Which men for us prepare when we go hence
 Do sleep so well we hear no sound of tears,
 While yet we are awake 'tis best that we
 All cause for weeping cleanly wipe away.
 The woman loves thee, and her life she'd give

If by that act thy life for thee she'd save.
 Delilah, hither come and speak with him.
 Lead him where yon two columns closely stand,
 The strong support of all these massive roofs,
 Whereon do sit a mighty host to-day,
 Where all can see, and none have need to hear
 The parting words ye twain together speak.

Delilah.

My lord, come thou with me; we'll foil them yet.
 I have a knife; 'tis sharp, and thou art strong.
 I'll lead thee swift, do thou but follow me.
 If we may not escape, then death we'll meet—
 A death more fit for thee than they would give;
 And, best of all, with thee, my lord, I'd die.
 We whom hard Life would separate, kind Death
 Would bind together, hand in hand, for aye.

Samson.

Lead thou me now unto the columns two,
 And after that some guide to me will come;
 As yet I know not what—but it will come.

Delilah.

Lean thou on me, while thitherward we go.
 Oh! Samson, if thy God the power doth have
 To save thee from this death, call now on Him.
 Let Dagon or Jehovah victor be,
 So we may know which god the true god is.
 Thy God 'gainst thee is sore offended now;
 But as thou saith thy God's a God of Love,
 He thee will sure forgive if thou dost ask.

Samson.

The God of my fathers doth not forgive
 The sins of any man because he asks.

The man must learn the path, then walk therein.
 No man I know contrariwise can walk
 From what God in the womb of time foresaw.
 And what He doth foresee must still be done,
 Else all is false, and there's no God on high.
 A tool am I, wrought by Jehovah's hand.
 The work I've done directed was by Him.
 His help I need not ask, nor will He give
 To work that diff'rent is than what He wills.
 So if He wills that I this death shall die,
 Then it is meet and right His will be done.

Delilah.

If thou unto thy God no wrong hath done,
 Thou should'st me all forgive. A tool was I
 With which thy God did work his will on thee.
 Speak, speak, and say thou dost forgive me, love,
 Before they take thee from me hence away.

Samson.

Thy love for me all wrong hath blotted out,
 And I forgive thee all. Love makes thee pure.
 Here stand beside me for a little while;
 Somewhat to say unto these men have I;
 Part not from me, I know not what may come,
 And I am glad to have thee with me now.

Delilah.

My love, no need for parting is; we'll go
 By one sweet road unto the journey's end.
 This knife I have will swift two lives let forth;
 And as my love for thee hath made me clean,
 Thy God will all forgive when we are gone.

Samson.

Hush ! Speak not thus. Take thou my hand in thine.
 Place me between the columns now, that I
 Unto these men my last brief speech may make.
 Within a fire burns I've felt before.
 It presageth to them when forth it bursts
 Disaster great, yet they have made it burn.
 Lords and princes, with thee I fain would speak.
 I will be brief, nor make thee long discourse.
 Refuse me not, but grant me this request.

Officer.

Speak thou ; be swift of tongue ; thy words we'll hear ;
 Thy life thou can'st not save, so ask it not ;
 Nor longer life, for all's appointed now.
 What I had power to do I have performed.
 Call on thy God, whom thou so high dost hold ;
 If he His hands, by Dagon tied, can loose,
 He may them forth outstretch, and save thy life.
 'Twould please me well to see a god thus act.
 A life well saved were more than two lives made.

Samson.

Ye men of Philistia, to ye I speak :
 I do not ask ye now my life to spare,
 Nor do I crave for mercy at your hands.
 I have no fear. I shrink not from the end.
 To many men death have I dealt myself,
 And death I know must come at last to me.
 Avoidance there is none, nor time nor place
 Know we. The weak man knoweth length of years,
 Then lieth down and breathes his spirit forth
 In peace, and with his friends is sepulchred.

The strong man stalketh forth in all his pride,
And death doth smite him down while yet he walks.
The hoary-headed sire the youth outlives ;
Still everything doth blossom for the grave.
The chain of years which each one here doth own
Hath numbered links, and can no farther reach
Than He who wrought the chain intends it shall.
And who by violence that chain doth break,
Responsible is held by Him on high.
So if ye well have judged all mine offense,
And to conclusion come that I must die,
Then if your light with hatred be not dimmed,
Ye do no wrong, and I must not resist.
But first I'll ask ye whence doth come your light ?
For much I fear that light doth lead ye wrong.
My sires came up from Egypt long ago,
And unto Canaan light with them they brought
Of that one God who unto them revealed
His full intent, and hitherward them sent.
Baal, Berith, Molech, and Chemosh foul,
Ashtoreth, Dagon, all the foolish things
In ignorance conceived, He bade cast down ;
For He alone is God. He made the earth
And all that therein is—all living things.
He made the sun, and He the sun doth rule ;
Nor Adrammelech, nor Anammelech
Within the sun do find a nuptial place.
The sun is God's great work—not God himself.
And ye who sacrifices make to him
Do what is vain, and ye yourselves befool ;
And in the midnight darkness of your souls
Ye still the light reject, and blind remain.
I, whom ye have condemned to horrid death,
Do fear ye not—Jehovah is my God.

He hath in me wrought woe upon this land;
 And, but that I have sinned and disobeyed,
 Ye would not captive had me here this day.
 Still, though I captive be, the end's not yet.
 Jehovah, who beside me oft hath stood,
 Stands by me now; I feel His breath; I hear
 Him calling unto me; the end is nigh.
 Oh! ye people, now hearken unto me:
 Ye have this day Almighty God defied,
 And ye of mine infirmity have made
 The vantage-ground whereon to stand and hurl
 Offensive insults, coward-like, at me.
 My deeds of sin and violated vows
 Offended sore the Mighty One on high,
 And he permitted ye to punish me,
 And I have, man-like, paid the penalty
 Of laws defied, when God hath made them plain.
 Still God will come to me again I know,
 As He hath come when I have cried before.

Priest.

Seize him! Now hath he grown contemptuous
 Of all our gods and us, and here reviles
 The names of those we long have proudly served.
 'Tis as I've said—the man dissembleth now;
 And we who know of En Hakore, do know
 'Tis dangerous to leave him longer rave.
 Seize him, I say! And if he doth resist,
 Then slay him where he stands, nor make delay.
 The evil spirit worketh in him now.

Delilah.

They come to take thee now my lord, my love.
 Oh! cry to Him whom thou dost say hath heard,
 And answer sent when thou hast cried before.

Call thou upon thy God, and He may hear,
 And send thee from this danger dire and dark.
 Thou shalt not die, my love, my love, and leave
 Me here a leafless branch upon life's tree.

Samson.

Place now my hands upon the columns two,
 And here beside me do thou closely stand,
 While I unto my God my voice will lift,
 And He will work His foreknown will thro' me.
 Oh, God! now do the heathen madly rage;
 They lift up their hands and shake them at thee;
 Defiance they hurl at thee, oh! my God,
 And me they condemn and haste to destroy.
 Oh! God, the times thou hast chosen to do,
 Hip and thigh with my hands you smote them ~~sue~~,
 And thou hast declared to cast them all down.
 Is this, oh! my God, thine appointed time?
 Hear me, my God; give me strength this one day
 To deliver me from their hands, oh! God,
 And beat down these heads here lifted so high.
 'Neath the palms of thy feet crush them, oh! God.
 Tear them down in thy wrath, and cast them out.
 I feel thee now; thou art with me I know.
 Back! men of Philistia, ye come too late!
 Back from me now! Samson, the Nazarite,
 He who of old his thousands hath slain,
 Fears ye not! Oh! God, thy strength to declare,
 These columns I'll shake! They tremble! They break!
 They totter, oh! God! I hear them! They fall!

PART X.

HERE ENDETH ALL.

Chorus of Women.

A noise goes forth thro'out the land
 Of wailing and of woe;
The mighty ones on every hand
 In death are lying low;
And all Philistia's daughters weep, sore-smitten by this
 blow.

Samson; the Hebrew Nazarite,
 Hath torn our temple down;
He's turned our joy to mourning night;
 He's borne away our crown;
And now the Hebrews scoff and say their God doth on us
 frown.

We need not cry unto our gods;
 Our gods no more can hear;
Our backs are beaten sore with rods;
 We tremble now in fear.
Beneath the mighty temple walls lie all our kinsmen dear.

Woe! woe! unto ye Philistines,
 The Hebrew triumphs now.
Woe! woe! unto ye Philistines,
 Your heads in sorrow bow—
Your princes and your mighty men are taken from ye now.

The strangers who from Egypt came
 Now sing aloud with joy ;
 They lift on high Jehovah's name,
 And Canaan's gods destroy.

The end hath come; our greatness gone; our grief no
 hopes alloy.

Woe! woe! unto ye Philistines,
 The Great Sea loudly roars.
 Woe! woe! unto ye Philistines
 Beside the Great Sea's shores.

Our day now draweth to a close, and Judah's lion roars.

Manoah.

Brethren of Dan, in Azzah is much noise,
 And now ascends herefrom great sounds of woe;
 Now are these people mourning for their dead.
 My son beneath yon ruin buried lies;
 And while with no resistance we may meet,
 We'll take him forth from there, and bear him home.
 And from this day the sons of Dan will tell
 Of that great man whom God did separate
 To be to Him a Nazarite, but who
 Did greatly sin, and sorely punished was
 For his offense. Yet as his sins were born
 Of love for one who fondly loved him too,
 The sins of both are now clean wiped away,
 And God hath by this end us plainly shown
 That men must not condemn, or turn aside
 From any man until they surely know
 If he be ripe, or over-ripe, or yet
 Aborted seed from whence no fruit will spring.
 God's time man's time is not—thus much we know.
 As men a field replough whereon was sown
 Some seed, which, germinating slow, have failed

To burst the womb of earth in their due time,
 Oft find the seed have still put forth their roots,
 And in themselves contain all that is need
 To bring in time to come good harvest home,
 Had they been left alone, but ruined now,—
 So men by hasty judgment oft may mar
 A life which, better used, would diff'rent end.

Chorus.

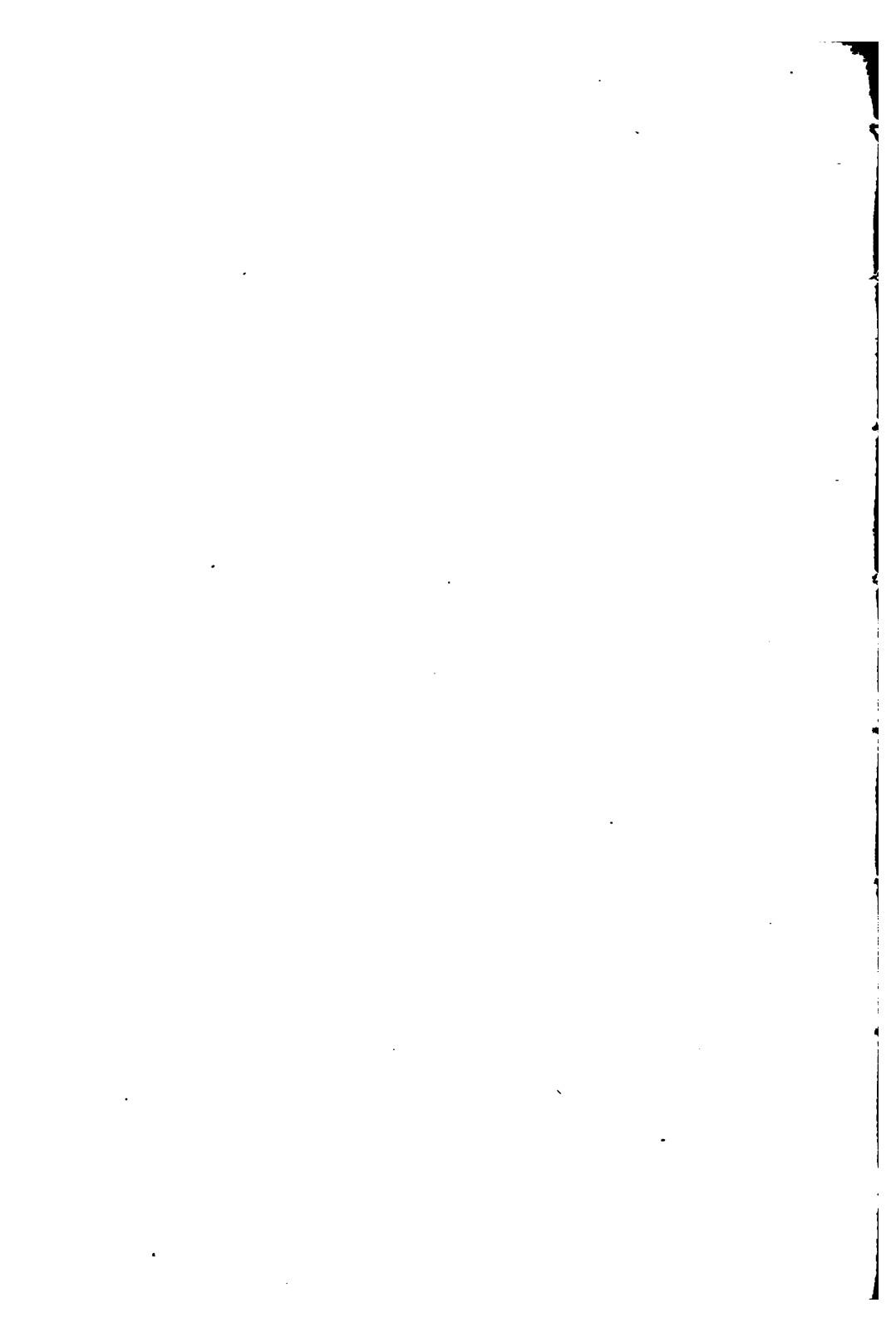
Now hast thou declared thyself, oh ! God,
 And thy promises thou hast kept.
 'Neath the palms of thy feet the heathen is trod,
 By the winds of thy wrath they are swept.

What thou hast foretold still must be done ;
 What thou dost foredoom is foredoomed.
 The warp and woof of life thou hast spun ;
 No fiber is idly consumed.

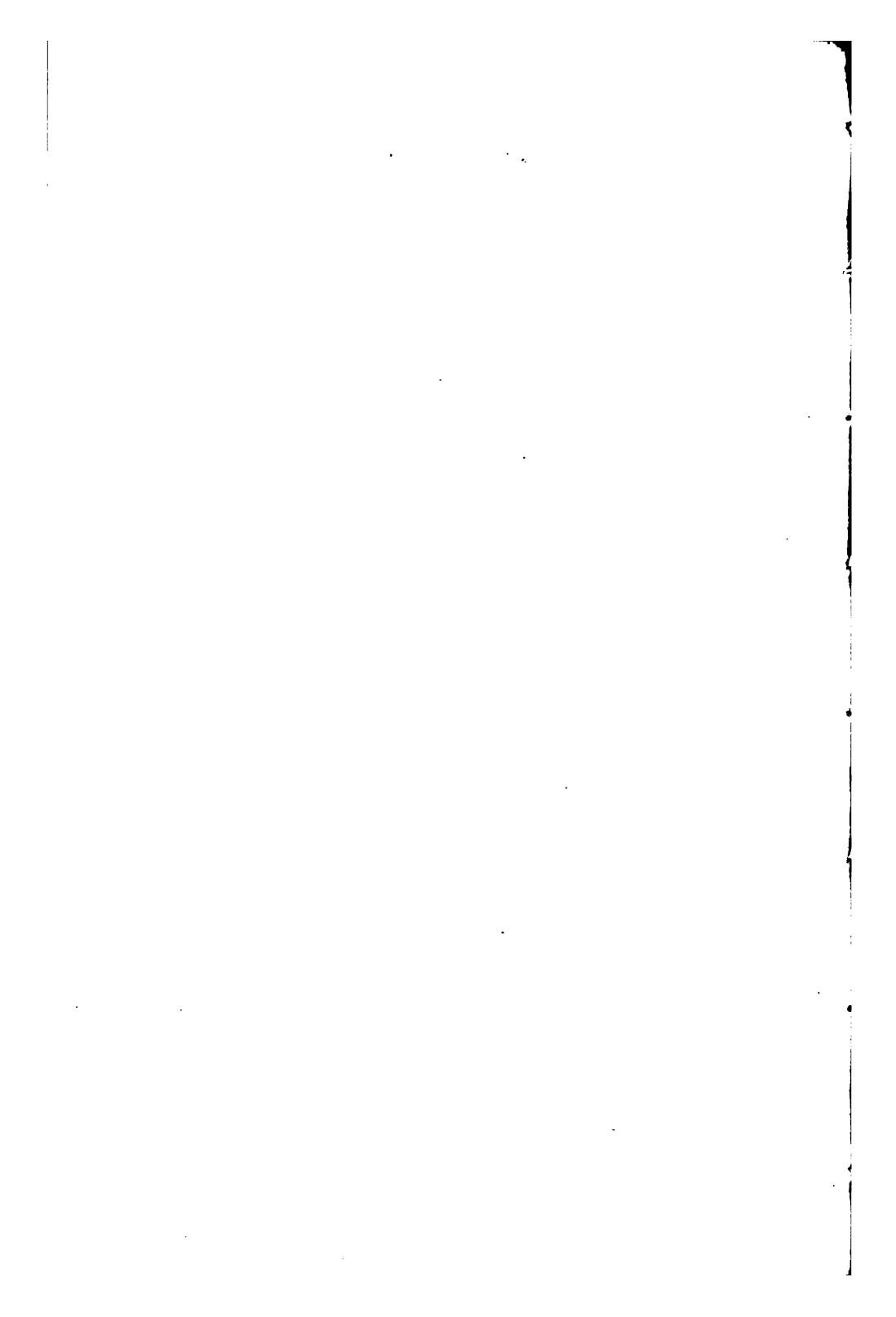
Manoah.

Here now they lie—in death not separate.
 As God in death hath bound these twain as one,
 We'll not divide. The master-thought of God
 Is love. So judge ye not how these have loved,
 Nor why. We'll hold by God they married were,
 And he the nuptial feast for them prepared.
 And now we'll bear them to that mansion dark
 Where all the sons of men at last reside
 After the moving-time of life is passed.

[THE END.]



Miscellaneous Verses.



CIRCE.

I turn to a page in the book of life, a page from the long
ago;

'Tis but one leaf in the blotted book I fain to you would
show;

'Twas writ in a time when the world seemed fair, the life-
tide hot and strong,

When my soul was meshed in the sensuous spell of the
sweet, false Circe's song.

She sang me to sleep in that by-gone time, in a sleep I
shall know no more;

For never my soul returned to me since I left Ææ's shore.

Oh! have you heard of that siren's wiles—of her necro-
mantic power?

How she'd lure men far from the homeward track, and
lull them asleep for an hour?

And how she'd awake them from their dreams, and kill
them then with scorn?

The blood of the dead was 'neath her feet like the dew on
the rose at morn.

Still men would seek her just the same as the moth the
flame at night,

To die in a passionate bliss of pain, loving the killing
light.

Such was she whom the poets sung in their never-dying
lays;

Such is she who won my love in the languorous summer
days.

I drank with joy the Upas draught, tho' I knew her false
and frail;

The chalice of love was dearer to me than to monk the
Holy Grail.

When the light of her eyes burned into my blood, what
wonder that I forgot

That my senses reeled like oneadrunk with the blood of
the vine fruit hot?

Fair is she as the daughters of men when wooed by the
sons of God;

Lithe as the serpent, the palms of her feet scarce dint the
yielding sod;

Voice like the music soft and sweet the dream birds make
when they sing;

Hair like a mesh of golden threads 'round a parian brow
doth cling;

A sense entrancing, mystic light lurks in her azure eyes,
And, like Perseis' daughter of old, cruel she is and wise.

In the dazzling light of her sunny smile I took no heed
of time,

And, wooed by the music of her song like the sea bells'
tender chime,

I gave to sense a full release, and Love, ah, Love was
king;

And he who kneels at the throne of Love the tribute of
Life must bring.

She stooped to me from her high estate with her lovers
by her side;

She stooped to me, and yet I knew in every act she lied.

While she sang her witching, wiling song, a willing slave
I knelt;

Men wiser than I have bowed before, and their thraldom
proudly felt,

When the guerdon won was a woman's smile—the dream
of a woman's love.

To win these things men pawn their lives their falseness
still to prove;

Tho' I knew this end to me would come, it came, alas!
too late—

My love had grown so deep and strong it left no room
for hate.

She treadeth still the same old path, new lovers still she
wins;

She sings her songs in the same sweet way, while her
magic web she spins.

She careth not for the lives she's wrecked, for the souls
she's cast away,

And I pray to God there may not come to her a reck'ning
day.

The years have brought at last to me surcease from some
regret;

Still often comes to memory things I would fain forget.

This is the page from the book of life I fain to you
would show:

The page that tells of the sweetest love my life did ever
know—

The love that comes to a man but once, worth heaven to
have won it well;

E'en lost, 'twas worth the stake of a soul, and a future of
yearning hell.

And so to-day I turn these leaves in a passion of longing
pain,

And pray for a blast to drive me forth to *Aæ*'s shores
again.

TWO WOMEN.

Unto me came two women, two women in a dream,
 In their presence so life-like, so real they did seem,
 When from sleep I awaked methought it was no dream.

One came unto me dancing, singing a song of glee,
 Love in her soft eyes glancing, wondrous fair was she ;
 All of my soul entralling with her sweet minstrelsy.

Sinuous trailing garments swept past her iv'ry feet ;
 Every rhythmic motion told of a form complete ;
 Her snowy, swelling bosom thrilled with passion replete.

Like some antique statue, graceful in every pose,
 Tinct were her cheeks with blushes, forehead like Alpine
 snows,
 Lips soft kisses inviting, like op'ning buds of the rose.

Bright locks backward streaming, sun-woven seemed to be ;
 Wreath'd with fragrant blossoms, jasmine and anemone ;
 This, the fairest of women, came in my dream to me.
 In her hand was a chalice filled with life-giving wine,
 Rarest blood of the vintage, brought from a sun-kissed
 clime ;
 She offered, and gently bade me drink of the draught
 divine.

Sweet was the song she sang me, telling me to forget
 The past and its many sorrows, which linger with me yet.
 Oh ! drink the draught Love sends you—banish the fiend
 Regret.

Her balmy breath swept o'er me; she stooped in timid grace;

Her yielding form so near me I caught in wild embrace.
Her golden hair enmeshed me; with kisses I burned her face.

Quick from my side upstarting, fear came into her eyes;
Her lips with love-words parting, quivered in sad surprise;
With trembling hand she pointed, crying, "There the shadow lies."

I looked, and there before me another woman stood;
Solemn and stern her visage, chilling the founts of blood;
On her breast writhed a serpent—one of the Nile's fierce brood.

Over her neck and shoulders her long white tresses fell;
Her brow with care-lines furrowed; her glance wrought awesome spell,
Driving away the sunshine; darkness with her did dwell.

Something about this woman was fair and sweet to view;
Chilling, and yet alluring, which stronger I hardly knew;
I thrilled with mournful yearning, yet from her backward drew.

She spake to me then, "Oh! mortal, long have I strove to win

Thy life from the ways of darkness, of passion, and of sin;
But ever I find this other undoing what I begin.

She, I know, is the fairest; her beauty will not remain.
Her soft cheeks, tint with blushes, own but a transient stain,
And he who loves her reapeth an aftermath of pain.

Drink the wine from this chalice, no yearning doth it
 still;
 In the heart of this flower hides a worm that lurks to
 kill;
 Tho' beautiful these blossoms, their fruitage worketh ill.

Say, do you know this woman--this woman fair forsooth,
 Luring you unto loving? Her love doth bring but ruth.
 Falsehood men call this maiden, and I am her sister,
 Truth.

Choose between us, oh, mortal! The choice before you
 lies;
 She the frailest of women, hidden in fairest guise,
 I throughout time unchanging, unfair unto your eyes."

Stood two women before me, two women in a dream,
 In their presence so life-like, so real they did seem,
 When from sleep I awakened methought it was no dream.

Love was the gift they offered; the off'ring made me
 wroth;
 To choose between these women, the act I could but
 loathe;
 My soul was filled with sorrow. Ah, me! I loved them
 both.

Truth seemed so stern and cruel, yet tender, too, was she,
 Unveiling all life's falseness, drawing the curtain for me,
 Showing, tho' great the promise, the harvest small shall be.

The ways of these two women I knew were far apart;
 To choose which one to follow wrought anguish in my
 heart;
 As when one dreams of dying, from sleep I strove to start.

Truth walks the paths of sorrow; her crown is set with
 thorns;
 And who Truth's way would follow, life's choicest pleasures
 mourns;
 He beareth many burdens; no light his path adorns.

Turned I then to her sister; she was still standing there;
 Sweetest of all dream-women, a vision wond'rous rare,
 Luring away from darkness—wooing away from care.

Ah! the scent of the roses came to me then once more,
 The light of my darling's smiling seemed brighter than
 before;
 I could not lose this woman—to keep her love I swore.

Then I cried in my dreaming, "Come, oh! bride of my
 youth!
 Thou with the wine of passion and love that brought no
 ruth,
 I hold thee before all women; but still I love thee, Truth."

The brow of Truth grew awful; the serpent which she
 wore
 At first upon her bosom now in her hand she bore;
 She went unto my darling, and I could look no more.

A cry broke on my dreaming of anguish and of dread,
 And at my feet sweet Falsehood fell in her beauty, dead!
 Then Truth there gently kneeling, her mantle o'er her
 spread.

I waked then from my dreaming, a dreaming sad forsooth,
 For I had loved sweet Falsehood—the first love of my
 youth;
 But now I know life better—I love thee best, oh, Truth!

HAUNTED.

The snow lies white in the valley,
 The snow lies white on the hill—
 Lies white on yon distant hill;
 Lies white on the silent mansions
 Out there on the storm-beat hill.
 You'd never dream it a peopled place—
 The people are all so still.

The wind moans low down the valley,
 The wind shrieks high o'er the hill—
 Shrieks high o'er the tomb-crowned hill,
 And the dead folks over yonder—
 'Tis a thought one's blood to chill—
 The dead their watch are keeping
 Out there where the storm shrieks shrill.

I gazed from my window dreaming
 A dream of the long ago—
 "The sweet, sad long ago."
 I saw a white-robed woman,
 And she wept as one in woe.
 'Twas a dream—for from their sleeping
 The dead come not, we know.

I sat in my chamber dreaming,
 Where the fire-light glimmered low—
 Where the fire gleamed high, now low.
 Methought I heard one passing—
 Heard footsteps faint and slow.
 They scarcely broke the stillness
 As they fell on the drifted snow.

All my soul then thrilled with terror,
 With a fear unfelt before—
 With a dread unknown before ;
 And, moved by an unseen presence,
 I opened my chamber door.
 There came from the night-wrought shadows
 A form from the land of yore.

Then my heart beat high with yearning,
 For I'd known this form of yore—
 In the dream-kept time of yore.
 I knew the fair, white garments
 Which this still dream-woman wore
 Were the same in which they robed her
 When tombward my love they bore.

Amaranth wreathed her tresses ;
 In her hand she bore a rose—
 A fragrant snow-white rose—
 The rose I placed on her bosom
 While so calmly she reposed.
 Methought she was but sleeping—
 'Till the coffin lid was closed.

I gazed on this white-robed being
 While my heart beat quick and low—
 In its yearning, beating low,
 'Till athwart the chamber's stillness
 Fell a voice I well did know.
 The words—Ah ! the words it uttered—
 Thrilled with ineffable woe.

"Long, long, I have watched and waited,
 But, alas, you would not come—
 Unto me you would not come.

I was so lonely without you,
 So weary of darkness and gloom,
 I have fled the land of shadows—
 The ghost-trod realm of the tomb.

“Once you wreathed your arms about me,
 And your lips oft pressed to mine—
 In passion oft pressed to mine ;
 And you said my eyes were lode-stars
 Guiding you to realms divine ;
 And you swore death could not sever
 The chords of a love like thine.

“You laid your head on my bosom,
 And you said my breath was wine—
 My breath was life-giving wine.
 How soon, how soon you forgot me,
 Oh ! how false all vows of thine ;
 Too soon your head you pillow'd
 On another's breast than mine.

“Thro' my eyes, once blind with kisses,
 Now the worms creep to and fro—
 Ah ! the worms writhe to and fro ;
 O'er this hand the ghost-rose presses ;
 See the worms crawl to and fro ;
 Thro' the heart once glad with loving
 The cypress roots now grow.”

Thus spake this dream-haunting being
 To me in the fire-light's glow—
 In the fire-light's fitful glow ;
 Thus spake this night-haunting vision
 From the land of the “Long Ago.”
 When she ceased, I strove to answer,
 And my spirit yearned with woe.

"Go back to your peaceful resting,
 Go back to your home on the hill—
 To your home on the tomb-crowned hill.
 This anguish my love is attesting,
 My path is toward thee still;
 I seek the dark waves of Lethe;
 To your home, till I come, be still."

"Ah, no, I will never leave you;
 To the tomb I will no more go—
 To the worms I will no more go.
 I'll follow you thro' the sunshine,
 Be with you in joy or woe;
 You shall drink no sweet nepenthe;
 Lo, I at your side shall go."

While I drink and laugh the loudest,
 The gayest of all the crowd—
 The maddest of all the crowd—
 You'd never dream that beside me,
 When my songs ring blithe and loud,
 Stands a constant, unseen presence—
 A dead woman in her shroud!

F A T E.

Years, and the ending of years;
 Springs, and the loss of springs;
 Tears, and the drying of tears,—
 Life unto each of us brings.
 Still under the snow the violets grow; to the wall the
 ivy clings.

Oh! could we cast aside
 Our winter garments of woe!
 Now spring comes as a bride—
 I hear her hot blood flow;
 And I dream again of an ivy vine and a place where
 violets grow.

Oh! to turn back again
 Unto another spring!
 Oh! for the ceasing of pain,
 And tears which mem'ries bring;
 Oh! dead, past years! Oh! violets crushed! Oh! graves
 where ivies cling!

Oh! for the ending of time,
 And oh! for the death of spring,
 When mem'ry will be no crime,
 And soul unto soul may cling.
 Then fate from the wrack and ruin of life may some fra-
 ition bring.

I send you an ivy leaf,
 You send me a violet—
 One blasted by winds of grief—
 One washed with rains of regret.
 But oh! for the ceasing of winds and rains and dreams
 we'd fain forget.

And never a spring shall come
 With raiment of song and leaf;
 Never shall violets bloom
 But they'll revive our grief.
 The anguish of memory mine, and thine in life finds no
 relief.

Strong is our love, oh ! love,
 And it no sinning knows !
 Pure, faithful it doth prove,
 And ever dearer grows.
 But oh ! for the breaking of that one link welded by
 fate's hard blows !

Years, and the ending of years ;
 Springs, and the loss of springs ;
 Tears, and the drying of tears,—
 Life unto each of us brings ;
 But only the past is mine and thine, and mem'ries of
 other springs.

SHE IS DEAD.

How still she is—her beautiful face
 Illumed with a smile of infinite grace.
 The tangled meshes of golden hair
 Fall over her neck and shoulders bare.
 The half-closed eyes which seem to see
 Past the time that is to the time to be.
 The lips like carven rosebuds red
 Seem trembling still with words unsaid.
 She lies like one in a languid swoon—
 In a dream of love which endeth soon.
 The snowy garments, which should conceal
 The marble form, too much reveal.
 I see the stains on her neck and breast,
 Where passionate kisses oft were pressed.

The rounded arms, like sculptured stone,
Are folded now—their labor done.

With myrtle and rose and apple bloom
The air is heavy within the room,

And all is still, save the voice of a dove
Who mournfully calls his missing love.

As I gaze upon her, lying thus,
My thoughts turn back to Lampsacus,

Where we together worshipped well
With a faith made strong by love's sweet spell,

And we drank to the lees the draught divine
Of the sparkling, sweet Lampsacian wine.

And, loving so well, we knew no wrong—
We lived in a realm of dance and song.

She plucked love's fruit, and bit to the core,
Then cast it down, and asked no more.

She had found the hidden worm that gnaws,
The bitter curse from the primal cause—

The thing which lurketh within the soul,
Unseen of the eye, yet mars the whole;

And she sang—"If love must pass away
With life, I'd fondly bid life stay;

"But love may die, and life go on;
And what is life when love is gone?

"The heap of ashes that was a rose
A fragrant flower may recompose;

"But the ashes of love, in the hand of Fate,
Are moulded oft into buds of hate.

"Oh, love, oh, life, may this summer sea
Drift us hand in hand to eternity."

Together we've reached the end at last;
The song is finished, the echo passed.

As I see her lying calmly there,
With the old, sweet smile she used to wear,

I question not—I do not call—
What has been is enough for all.

And I would not wish her back again,
E'en if the wish would not be vain.

And I would not have her tell to me
One single word of the mystery

Which each man in his time must learn
As long as the wheels of Time shall turn.

I stand a pilgrim at this shrine,
Where once was all I held divine.

But the light that made the temple grand
Will gleam no more, and—I understand.

A D R E A M .

I dreamt, I dreamt that I was dead,
And walked a land where ghosts abound;
The black bats shrieked about my head—
I trembled at the awful sound.
I passed along with aspect brave,
Quelling the dread within my breast;
At last I reached a narrow grave,
And whispered low, "Now I shall rest."

I laid me down with yearning sigh,
 I felt so sad to be alone,
 When from a grave—'twas very nigh—
 I heard what seemed to be a moan.
 I could not rest, I could not sleep,
 My neighbor seemed to be so sad;
 I wondered why the dead should weep—
 The dead, I thought, should be so glad.
 I could not rest, I could not sleep;
 I longed to see my neighbor's face;
 I sought that grave so dark and deep;
 God keep thee, love, from such a place.
 A maiden fair was lying there;
 I saw her plain as I now see
 Upon thy breast those roses rare—
 A maiden once so dear to me,
 A maiden fair with spun-gold hair,
 And eyes like pansies bathed in dew;
 And on her breast were roses rare,
 Just like the roses worn by you.
 Her wet, red lips and snow-white neck;
 Her rounded arms and small soft hands;
 Her cheeks, which peach-bloom seemed to fleck;
 Her braided hair like golden bands,—
 I swear I saw her just as plain
 As I see you, instinct with life;
 I could not tell how long she'd lain
 Within that place of horrors rife.
 I felt the time had not been long;
 I said, "I know thou art not dead;
 Give me, oh, sweet, a little song—
 A kiss, love, from those lips so red;
 Infold me in thine arms, oh, love;
 Enmesh me in thine hair of gold.

All things in life may changeful prove,
 But love doth ever faithful hold.
 Turn to me love, oh ! turn once more ;
 I'll drink again the draught divine
 I quaffed in those bright days of yore,
 When faith was strong and thou wert mine.”
 ’Twas thus I wooed that maiden fair—
 Never a word to me she spake—
 Until it seemed in dark despair
 My grave bonds I did wildly break.
 I caught her in my outstretched arms ;
 I cried, “Oh ! love, love, come to me !
 Thou here art safe, love, from all harm ;
 Come, sleep thou here eternally.”
 The roses on her snowy breast
 Before my eyes fell all away ;
 The golden hair her forehead pressed,
 Turned into heaps of ashes gray ;
 The dewy lips, the pansy eyes,
 The little hands, grave’s mould encrust.
 I stood appalled, in wild surprise—
 My maiden fair had turned to dust.
 Ah, God ! the pain when love is vain,
 When even in the grave we part.
 But quick I felt another pain—
 A hungry worm gnawed at my heart.
 This pain at last my dream did break ;
 I see the sunshine pouring down ;
 Thank God, I am awake ! awake !
 No graves, no ghosts upon me frown.
 This dream for thee I’ve interwove
 With blossoms dropped from overhead—
 An off’ring to my little love,
 Who laughs at all that I have said.

Ah! yes, you laugh at what I've said,
 And at my dream you lightly mock;
 'Tis awful tho' to dream you're dead;
 The waking, too, is such a shock.

Swing high, swing low, swing to and fro;
 I hear the brown thrush calling;
 I see the sun descending low
 In purple oceans falling;
 And down yon hill where orchards be
 I hear a robin singing,
 While I sit here and read to thee,
 And keep the hammock swinging.

MERLIN TO VIVIEN.

God fashioned thee in wondrous wise,
 Vivien;
 No fairer thing could he devise,
 Vivien.
 He formed thee for a very queen—
 Tall, stately, and of regal mien.
 Ah! would that God had kept thee clean,
 Vivien.

O, thou art as white lilies fair,
 Vivien;
 Dark, tarn-like eyes, and tawny hair,
 Vivien;
 And lush, large mouth—the red of it
 Like cushioned thrones, where kisses sit,
 And strong, white teeth for biting fit,
 Vivien.

Thy sloping shoulders, silver sheen,
 Vivien ;
 Thy swelling breasts, half hid, half seen,
 Vivien ;
 Thy garments, wind-tossed to and fro,
 Make perfumed trailings where they go ;
 About and on thee longings grow,
 Vivien.

Thy breath with hotness it doth blow,
 Vivien ;
 Thy cheeks are red with passion's glow,
 Vivien ;
 Thine eyes with amber flames are lit,
 Thine hair—thro' the dusk gold of it
 A million hissing serpents flit,
 Vivien.

Why comest thou in such a shape,
 Vivien ?
 Would God from thee I could escape,
 Vivien .
 The devil sent thee to my side ;
 Thou art the king of hell's own bride ;
 Come unto me in all thy pride,
 Vivien.

I yearn for thee ; I flee from thee,
 Vivien .
 My life thou makest dark for me,
 Vivien .
 I fled unto the Northern Sea ;
 The foam-waves which fell over me
 Did wash thee—all the limbs of thee,
 Vivien .

I hide myself where forests be,
 Vivien;

And here thou comest unto me,
 Vivien.

Thou bindest me in such sweet spell,
 Thy mesh—thou weavest it so well
 It holdeth me as fast as hell,
 Vivien.

It is not love, it is not hate,
 Vivien;
 O, 'tis the hard-forged hand of Fate,
 Vivien,
 Which draggeth me unto despair,
 And lures my soul with such a snare
 As are thine eyes, as is thine hair,
 Vivien.

All other fetters I might burst,
 Vivien;
 Of all hell's snares thine are the worst,
 Vivien;
 The snares of twining arms of snow,
 Of kissing lips where roses grow,
 And languid breathings soft and low,
 Vivien.

In fields where long lush grasses lean,
 Vivien,
 Where poppies climb and grow between,
 Vivien,
 Things just like thee creep here and there;
 Things lithesome, long, and very fair,
 Whose sting to men doth bring despair,
 Vivien.

Hark ! List, the thunders clash and roar,
 Vivien ;
 List to the sheeted waters pour,
 Vivien ;
 It seems o'er Broceliandes' wood
 Doth reign a host of demon brood,
 Who fight and claim for thee, queenhood,
 Vivien.

Thine eyes' hot flames are quenched in tears,
 Vivien ;
 Thou tremblest now with secret fears,
 Vivien ;
 Come, climb up here within my beard ;
 Let mouth by mouth again be seared ;
 So be thou now no more afeared,
 Vivien.

Thus folded closely breast to breast,
 Vivien,
 While clinging form to form is pressed,
 Vivien,
 While burns again the flick'ring flame,
 The pride of youth, whose loss is shame,
 Thou'l win from me health, life, and fame,
 Vivien.

Lift up to me thy lily face,
 Vivien ;
 The secret of the woven pace,
 Vivien,
 Is when with eld man wends his way,
 When love hath ceased his soul to sway,
 When woman's "Yea" wins from him "Nay,"
 Vivien.

This pace is woven out of Time,
Vivien;
This pace has never yet been mine,
Vivien.

Ah, may it never come to me;
Rise up, and I will follow thee;
Lie still, lie still, it cannot be,
Vivien.

The secret of the waving hands,
Vivien,
Is when from borders of dark lands,
Vivien,
We see the women we have loved—
The women who have from us roved—
Extend their hands by love still moved,
Vivien,

And wave, and wave us unto them,
Vivien,
Each waving hand a star-like gem,
Vivien,
And we arise that we may go,
And follow those who beckon so,
Then Fate, with mocking shriek, cries "No!"
Vivien.

The woven pace is Present Strife,
Vivien;
The waving hands is Future Life,
Vivien;
Between the two there standeth Death;
The icy chillness of his breath
I feel around me like a wreath,
Vivien.

Oh, heat me with the heat of thee,
 Vivien ;
 My limbs all ice-wrought seem to be,
 Vivien ;
 Wrap me in gold from off thine head,
 O, kiss me till my lips grow red,
 Or leave me kissless, cold, and dead,
 Vivien.

I hear thy laughter's mocking tones,
 Vivien ;
 'Tis better than thy pleading moans,
 Vivien.
 The secret thou hast won so well
 Was all that I to thee could tell ;
 Go back unto thy lord in hell,
 Vivien.

Go, shrieking down the forest path,
 Vivien ;
 No woman thou ; thou art a wraith,
 Vivien.
 Thy scornful mouth, the red of it,
 Was flecked with poison adder's spit,
 And I to death by thee am bit,
 Vivien.

WHEN ROSES BLOOM.

The snow lies heaped in valley and on hill,
 The north wind shrieks across the frozen land,
 The weary earth lies quiet now and still,
 Held in strong winter's icy, iron hand.

But soon I know the sweet south wind will come
 With balmy breath to free the pregnant earth,
 And exiled birds will wing them to their home,
 Filling the air with melody and mirth.
 Life now to me seems but a bitter thing—
 A ceaseless strife, and filled with darksome gloom;
 But ah, to me, perchance, soon cometh Spring—
 With peace and hope and love, when roses bloom.

N E V E R M O R E.

We shall meet, ah, nevermore, nevermore.
 Come the Spring-tide wave of blossoms,
 Come the Summer rich with fruitage,
 Come the Autumn's ripened harvest,
 Come the Winter-time of resting—
 We shall meet, ah, nevermore, nevermore.

We shall go our ways divided evermore.
 You will wear the Spring-time's crowning,
 Eat the tamarind and pomegranate,
 Drink the sweet wine of the vintage,
 Sleep the rest sleep of the Winter—
 We shall never be united, nevermore.

I shall walk the path of Sorrow evermore.
 Garmented in mem'ry's ashes,
 Gath'ring husks of dead fruits fallen,
 Find but lees within the wine-cup,
 And my sleep oppressed with dreamings—
 Ghost-like, lonely, I shall wander evermore.

SUNSET NEAR WASHINGTON.

A silence which seems dense with sound
Broods o'er the scene, while all around
Dim forms arise from nether-ground.

Athwart the river's pulsing breast
A path of molten gold doth rest,
Outstretched unto the living West.

Not far, but seeming distant, spreads
The city, with its joys and dreads,
Where Lazarus with Dives treads,—

Where Virtue wears the garb of Shame,
While Vice flaunts thro' the halls of Fame,
And Honor dare not honor claim.

Yon dome, half hidden in the haze
Of rising night, reflects the rays
Of day's bright orb's receding gaze;

And yonder Marble Thought so white,
Which riseth from the realms of night
Unto the star-paved path of light,

Piercing the amethystine dyes,
In wondrous grandeur it doth rise
From earth, as tho' 'twould reach the skies.

City and dome and monument,
And path of gold the West hath lent,
And pearl-mist robes from the river sent,

All take a dream-like form for me—
A palace land of mystery—
Where I am not—yet seem to be.

ISLE OF REST.

There's a mystical island lying
 In a far-off pulsing sea,
 Where the sound of Zephyrus sighing
 Wakes perpetual melody.
 'Tis lit by a star
 That swingeth afar
 High o'er the storm-wave's crest;
 It riseth on high
 'Tween the sea and sky—
 This beautiful Isle of Rest.

On this isle a fountain is flowing
 Sweet water that bringeth peace;
 On its marge the lotus is blowing
 The flower of woe's release.
 The song of a bird
 Is all that is heard
 To wake a dream in the breast.
 Ah, where is this sea?
 Say, where can it be—
 This beautiful Isle of Rest?

I'll seek, and I'll seek till I find it,
 I'll search till the end of life,
 I'll bear a chalice, and bind it
 With that flower of dreaming rife;
 I'll drink of that fount
 Till my soul doth mount
 From earth with its cares oppressed;
 Where'er it doth lie
 I'll seek till I die
 This beautiful Isle of Rest.

THE WEAVER.

Time, the Weaver, works in season evermore.

In the Spring the seed he soweth,
In the Summer lush it groweth,
In the Autumn flax he treadeth,
Winter warp and woof he weaveth;—

Thus the Weaver works in season evermore.

These the Helpers whom he useth evermore:

Clotho, she the records keepeth,
Spins the fibers, pale Lachesis,
Cuts the thread lengths grim Atropos;—

These three sisters are the helpers
Whom the Weaver keepeth with him evermore.

Time, the Weaver, thus he weaveth evermore:

In the Spring the warp's Ambition
Loves the rich woof of the Summer;
Weaves in Autumn squares of knowledge,
Wisdom's circles weaves in Winter;—

Thus the Weaver fabrics weaveth evermore.

Time, the Weaver, thus he weaveth evermore:

Spring-time's raiments flower broidered,
Summer clads in royal purple,
Autumn's garments, brown moth-fretted,
Winter's samite soft, all whiteness;—

Thus the Weaver garments weaveth evermore.

Time, the Weaver, thus he weaveth evermore:

In the Spring he weaves the daisies,
Weaves in Summer passion flowers,
Autumn weaves he all fruits ripened,
Weaves in Winter sleep oblivion;—

Thus the Weaver weaves the ending evermore.

O M A R K H A Y Y A M ' S W I S H .

One who died in fair Iran,
 Standing yet upon the brink,
 Sent this word thro' Khorasan,
 Ere he quaffed the Parting Drink:
 "Hatim calls me; I must go;
 Yet, my friends, one boon I crave:
 Place me where the winds will blow
 Rose leaves softly o'er my grave.

"Deep in some sweet Gulistan,
 Where the bul-bul sings o'erhead,
 And the north winds gently fan,
 Place me, friends, when I am dead;
 When the muezzin in Meshed
 At eve the Faithful calleth up;
 With Kaiomurs and Kaikobad
 I, my friends, will go to sup.

"Ho, fill your glasses every one,
 And think not that I shall shrink.
 I have sate on Saturn's throne;
 I have sailed unto the brink
 Of the empurpled seas of space;
 I have stood, my friends, alone,
 With great Mithras face to face
 Ere he claimed me for his own.

"Tho' the Sufis scorn at me,
 Let the Sufis' scorning pass;
 Soon, my friends, again I'll be
 Face to face with great Mithras.

He who called me first to earth,
 He who ruleth over all,
 Giving death and giving birth
 Unto Rustom, unto Zal.

"Then fill the cup with Shiraz wine;
 And ho, my friends, drink every one;
 To-morrow's sun may never shine
 On Naishapûr or Babylon.
 Jamshyd is gone, and Estaker;
 On Khosrus' throne sits Alp Arslan;
 What, then, to us, or there or here,
 In Meshed or in Ispahan.

"When Hatim calls us we must go;
 We need not dread to quaff the drink,
 The soul uncrippled forth will flow,
 The carcass back to clay will sink;
 When ye who stand about me find
 My soul slipped forth, oh! then, I crave,
 Ye'll place me where the soft north wind
 Will scatter rose leaves o'er my grave."

IRENE.

Men wondered if thou wert a woman;
 Men wondered if thou hadst a soul;
 In form thou wert builded a human:—
 What law did thy being control?
 Thou wert white as the spume of the ocean;—
 Thou wert cold as a Psyche of ice;
 A thing without life or emotion—
 A thing without goodness or vice.

In the fathomless depths of thy being,
 In the pages unread by man,
 Was there some we would turn from on seeing?—
 Was there one we would searchingly scan?
 What story of passion they wondered
 Was writ that men might not read?
 What was it that marked thee as sundered
 From woman and woman's creed?

In the ivory cleft of thy bosom
 There was space for a head to rest.
 Didst thou never have yearnings to woo some
 Soul to sleep on thy breast?
 Did sleep to thee ne'er bring a vision
 Of Love with a passionate kiss,
 Which thy waking did turn to derision,
 And a laugh with the sound of a hiss?

God made thee and marked thee with curses;
 He sent thee the foolish to win;
 In thy mouth he put music for verses,
 In thine eyes he put lightnings of sin.
 Thou wert moulded in marvelous splendor.
 Were thy limbs of hot flesh and blood?
 If touched with a touch soft and tender,
 Wouldst thou quiver with sense understood?

I knew thee; tho' Sphinx-like to others,
 To me thou wert never a stone;
 Thy heart was as quick as another's
 To leap with desire alone.
 Thy veins were wounded and shivered
 With smitings inflicted by stealth,
 'Till the soul that was thine was delivered
 On the altar of sin-reddened wealth.

Thou wert ice, thou wert froth, thou wert burnings,
 All thy limbs were languid and weak;
 In thy soul there were longings and yearnings,
 In thine eyes there were tongues that could speak.
 Thou wert blind, thou wert dead, and unhuman;
 Thou wert dreaming; thou now art awake—
 Awake with the hot blood of woman,
 Striving her fetters to break.

Irene, oh! woman so stately,
 Oh! wonder of womankind,
 Dost thou scorn at the men who do hate thee,
 And laugh for thou knowest them blind?
 What thing doth thy fancy now fashion?
 What brings to thy cheek that stain?
 The heart of the lily is passion,
 The soul of the rose is pain.

What memories dark of regretting
 Come unto thee now when alone?
 Dost thou crave for the draught of forgetting
 When thou thinkest of days that are gone?
 Say, when in thy chamber thou weepest,
 Alone in thy woe, Irene,
 Or when in the night thou sleepest
 'Neath the torch of the Lampsacene,—

What is it that causeth thee sorrow,
 Whose soul was untouched before?
 What part from the Past wouldest thou borrow
 Could the Past come to thee once more?
 The winds of thy sighs are oppressive,
 The rains of thy tears are a flood,
 The strength of thee groweth aggressive,
 The heat of thee drieth thy blood.

I have loved thee when love was a burden,
 I hate thee now hatred is just;
 I give thee, oh! woman, thy guerdon,
 'Tis love's fruit deadened with dust.
 That fruit from thy hands I first tasted,
 Tho' its flavor I kept unseen;
 Still the ashes I hid all unwasted,
 To give back to thee, Irene.

Thy dolorous weeping and wailing
 Comes unto me all too late;
 'Neath the frosts of sin thou art paling,
 Oh! desolate victim of Fate.
 I am glad that thou canst not forget me
 While the wheels of Memory roll;
 I have taught thee at last to regret me;
 I have digg'd a grave in thy soul.

And in it, oh! woman, I've buried
 A ghost which will never sleep—
 A ghost that will never be wearied,
 Whose presence will make thee to weep.
 In the infinite deep recesses
 Of that place of shadows unclean,
 'Tis the Past with its hard caresses
 Which wounds thee to death, Irene.

NOT FORGOTTEN.

Not forgotten, though Time with tender hand
 Doth soothe the pain which separation gives.
 Not forgotten; in the hallowed land
 Of memory thine image lives;

Lives, as the shadow by a lily cast
 Upon the crystal bosom of some sleeping stream,
 Till by soft zephyr kissed, 'tis gone and passed—
 Gone to return when next the waters dream.

Not forgotten, tho' passing years have swept
 Their tides of sin and sorrow o'er my life.
 Still, my beloved, cryptic I have kept
 Fond thoughts of thee thro' all the strife.
 Tho' we have parted, and must meet no more,
 This signet Fate hath set upon our days;
 Still thou wilt be the same, oh! friend of yore,
 As tho' we ne'er had drifted sep'rate ways.

Not forgotten. The message which I send
 Across the widening seas of storm-beat years
 Memories sweet may bring to thee, my friend;
 I would not have it bring thee tears.
 I could not shape my course; the one bright star
 By which I trimmed my sails lost in the wrack
 Of gath'ring clouds, I drifted off so far
 I never reached again the homeward track.

NOCTURNES.

In the stillness of the night,
 When the Lyre's strings drop downward,
 Trembling with harmonic soundings,
 Every chord with music vibrant,
 Swept by mystic hands in skyland—
 You can hear it if you'll listen,
 Hear it soft, and sweet, distinctly—
 Hear the music of the Star Harp.

In the stillness of the night,
 When in sleep lie all the cities,
 Choral strains come drifting downward,
 Rarest music floating earthward
 From that grand choir far, far distant—
 You can hear it if you'll listen
 With your ears attuned to Nature—
 Hear the star song softly chanted:

In the stillness of the night
 Seek the forest, seek the green wood,
 Stand beneath some oak titanic—
 You can hear its life-blood rushing,
 Hear it laugh with mighty gladness,
 Making songs for the Dryades
 Dancing 'neath its wide-spread shadows.

In the stillness of the night,
 Stand beside some mountain streamlet
 Flowing merrily to seaward—
 You can hear a song of gladness,
 Chanted by an unseen chorus,
 Diapason of Naiades ;
 You can hear it if you'll listen—
 Hear the chorus of Naiades.

These, the voices of the night,
 Heard athwart the pulsing stillness,
 Nor reverb'rant, nor loud-sounding,
 But as voices come in dreaming
 From the outer halls of mem'ry—
 Falling on the soul's ears softly,
 Adumbrating the communion
 'Tween the Now and the Hereafter.

WHERE SHADOWS FALL.

Slowly and sad the Summer day now dies,
And I sit here, dear one, and dream of you.
A mystic light lies in the western skies,
Where erst the day-stream sunk beyond my view.
I dream of you, who brought unto my life
The fairest isle in all the stormy sea,
Where I could rest, free from the care and strife
Life's voyage brought, beloved, unto me.
And so I wander where my fancy lists,
Too fond, too weak, the present to recall;
Till you, too, pass beyond the golden mists,
And I am all alone where shadows fall.

MY SHATTERED VASE.

The potter took a lump of clay,
Whirled, and twirled, and smoothed away.
He then with deftly skill did chase
The semblance of a human face;
With thaumaturgic skill refined
He shaped a vase to hold a mind.

The potter gave this vase to me—
Eternally mine own to be;
And left it to mine own free will
What flowers I'd choose my vase to fill.

Forth went I to the world's broad field;
 My vagrant hand I 'gan to wield;
 I looked not up for eidelwiesse,
 But plucked the flowers 'neath mine eyes;
 And by life's sensuous south winds lulled,
 I heeded not what flowers I culled;
 I looked not forth for wintry days—
 I garlanded but summer bays.

Then like the Teian bard divine,
 I filled my vase with passion's wine!
 "Enough," I cried! "Enough for me!
 If love and pleasure mine shall be,
 Let me life's sunny hours beguile
 With music, wine, and woman's smile;
 And should black Sorrow on me frown,
 In Bacchic joys my griefs I'll drown."

But now life's summer days have fled;
 The rose is gone, the jasmine dead;
 My flow'rs have lost their wondrous hues—
 Beauty and odor all refuse.
 The wine of life hath lost its taste,
 And love and passion all effaced.

There was one flowret at my feet;—
 A flowret wild, but ah! how sweet.
 I did not pluck it when I could,
 For brighter buds my senses wooed.
 I could not pluck it when I would;
 My hands were dark with sin imbrued;
 And yet I never can erase
 The mem'ry of that flowret's grace.

Another wears it now, but he
 Can never love that flow'r like me.
 Its roots grow down within my soul;
 And while the seasons onward roll,
 In all the Springs that are to come,
 No flower like it again shall bloom;
 But it shall ever hold a place
 Amidst the ghosts that haunt my vase.

The essences which once did fill
 My vase pour forth in many a rill.
 No bud of promise there is left;
 It stands alone of all bereft.
 All gone the flowers which once did grace
 And beautify my shattered vase.

FOUR PICTURES.

I.

Two wee babies I here see.
 No care now dims their merry eyes.
 With tot'ring steps and laugh of glee
 They chase the swift-winged butterflies.
 I see them pluck the wayside flowers,
 And each one quickly cast away
 To clutch some brighter one that towers
 Above their heads in colors gay.
 Disturb them not; thus let them be;
 For lo! the night is coming on
 When they the flowers cannot see.
 Ah! baby days will soon be gone.

II.

Two young people here now stand
 Before the altar of their God.
 Henceforth together, hand in hand,
 One path by them will now be trod.
 The priest the holy words hath said
 Which make of two one single life.
 In pride the husband lifts his head ;
 In love and trust looks up the wife.
 He does not fear the coming strife ;
 She sees no storm-clouds coming on.
 Ah ! world with sorrow thou art rife—
 Their care-free days will soon be gone.

III.

Two old people all alone,
 Slowly unwinding the skein of life.
 With many a sigh, and many a moan,
 And many a tear their days are rife.
 Two-score years together they 've trod
 Life's bleak highway of pain and loss ;
 Together they 've passed beneath the rod—
 Together they bear their heavy cross.
 Now the pathway soon must close ;
 Soon their journey be o'er and done ;
 From earthly joys and earthly woes
 Two old people will soon be gone.

IV.

Two coffins here before me lie ;—
 Two forms so cold and still in death.
 Sightless now the once bright eye ;—
 Stilled the heart—breathed the last breath.

Now let the curtain o'er them fall;
 And oh! my heart, why tremble so?
 Alas! this is the end of all—
 You, too, will soon lie still and low.
 From baby days unto the grave
 The course, we know, is swiftly run;
 Then oh! my heart, beat high and brave,
 For there is rest when all is done.

A STROLL.

With weary heart I strolled to-day
 The streets of this great city;
 I saw some sights which made me gay,
 While others roused my pity.
 I saw fair forms of youth and pride
 - Bedecked with gems and laces,
 While others passed in ragged gowns,
 With hungry, care-worn faces.

I stood before the homes of pride,
 Rich with all earthly riches;
 I stopped where starving babies cried,
 While starving mother stitches.
 Such scenes could but my feelings touch;
 In grief my heart low sank, for
 I saw that some had far too much,
 And others naught to thank for.

I went into a temple, and
 Heard anthems sweet upfloat,
 And saw the congregation stand,
 Repeating prayers by rote.

And there were some who vainly tried
 To cheat the great "Good Giver" thus—
 "From hardened hearts and haughty pride,"
 Crying loud, "Good Lord, deliver us."

As forth the congregation went
 I saw some folks of worth,
 And some with eyes and nose upbent—
 Too good for this poor earth.
 The widow with her mite was there,
 The weak, the blind, the lame.
 Some sought the Gilead balm of prayer,
 Some, food for gossip came.

Then backward turned I to my home,
 My thoughts bent on humanity ;
 I wondered when the end would come
 To want and shame and vanity.
 And then I sighed, as sigh we must
 When we the truth recall :
 Worm-eaten flesh—bones turned to dust—
 At last doth end it all.

DURANTE VITA.

A helmless bark, sore tempest tossed
 Upon life's raging sea ;
 No beacon-light to guide me safe
 Where peaceful havens be.
 The sky's o'ercast with stormy wrack,
 No star-rift can I see.

I hear the thunder of the storm;
 I cannot shun the strife;
 The angry waters surge around
 Demons with malice rife.
 Well, tho' I sink beneath the flood,
 Love lasts as long as life.

MY BIRTHDAY.

To-day is the end of another year
 Of my life on this stage here below;
 I have lived, I have loved, shed sorrow's sad tear,
 Laughed with joy and mourned with woe;
 I have drunk life's wine to the bottomest lees;
 I have sown with unrest and I reap unease.

My house I built of "brick without straw,"
 And set it in shifting sand;
 Each pearl of my love was marred by a flaw—
 I shattered them all in my hand.
 The dreams that I dreamt in the hey-day of youth
 Have faded and gone, and they left me no truth.

"FAR CONTREE."

To-night I'll watch the dancers whirl
 In mazy twinings in and out—
 A very mirth-provoking rout.
 Perchance your form I'll see, dear girl;
 And if my gaze should rest on thee,
 Just think I dream of "Far Contree."

Ah, oft I've watched in dreamy bliss
 Your lithesome form, your gentle grace,
 And oft methought that I could trace
 Another's form. Ah, how I miss
 The tender smile she wore for me
 What time we dwelt in "Far Contree."

Within your eyes deep hidden lies
 Something that speaks the tender heart—
 The pure, sweet life, free from all art;
 The same as hers who doth arise
 In dreams when e'er your form I see—
 The maid I loved in "Far Contree."

And so, dear girl, forgive the glance
 Which follows you where'er you go,
 Because that other one, you know,
 Seems near me when I see you dance.
 And should I win one smile from thee,
 'Twill take me back to "Far Contree."

IN THE CORNER.

The old man sits in the corner,
 And his head is bended low;
 Before him as in a mirage
 The scenes of his past life go.
 He dreams of the days departed
 And the hopes he cherished then;
 His hopes like his days have vanished—
 Gone ne'er to return again.

The old man sits in the corner,
 And I gaze on his bended form ;
 And I cannot help regretting
 That he still must brave the storm.
 But oh, I pray the voice of Death
 May call me away from men
 Before my days have reached like his
 Unto three-score years and ten.

LENA LORD.

Oh, 'tis long since last we met,
 Lena Lord ;
 But I never shall forget,
 Lena Lord.
 Years may come and years may go ;
 Many friendships I may know ;
 Still my thoughts to thee will flow,
 Lena Lord.

Like the raven's wing thy hair,
 Lena Lord ;
 And thy brow like parian fair,
 Lena Lord ;
 And thy lips, like buds of rose
 Just half hid in winter snows,
 Rows of pearly teeth disclose,
 Lena Lord.

Of thy beauty I'll not sing,
 Lena Lord.
 Beauty is a fading thing,
 Lena Lord.

But thy gentle, winning art,
 And thy tender, loving heart,
 From thee never will depart,
 Lena Lord.

Now, between my life and thine,
 Lena Lord,
 There's a chord I can't divine,
 Lena Lord ;
 But I sometimes dream, and say
 "She hath wings close hid away;
 She will fly to me some day,"
 Lena Lord.

R O S E S.

Did you see that girl at the ball last night—
 Eden-breath'd rose-buds athwart her breast?
 How sweet they were; how queenly and white;
 I longed for one on my heart to rest.
 But she stood there—'twas a woman's way—
 Crushing the life from the fragile flowers.
 What matter to her? They had lived their day,
 And served to adorn her some vagrant hours.

She never thought of that olden time
 When the world was young and all roses white,
 Till at a woman's curious crime
 The roses blushed. 'Twas a wondrous sight
 To see the fairest of all God's flowers
 Turn blushing away from a woman's deed.
 They use them still to adorn their bowers—
 The breath of a rose can a strong man lead.

So be it, say I; the rose may lead,
 And a woman's smile may lure one on,
 But oh! beware of the soulless breed
 Who have no thought for the roses gone.
 I love them all—women and roses;
 My soul cries out for the scent and kiss.
 When the lights are out, and the ball-room closes,
 There's a white rose-bud and a woman I miss.

ACROSS THE WAY.

While at my labor every day,
 I often gaze across the way
 To catch a glance
 Of sun-lit hair and smiling face,
 And form that moves with gentle grace,
 And weave romance

 Of maiden fair with soft blue eye,
 Whose path to my path close should lie
 Thro' life alway;
 Whose voice should ever greet mine ear,
 In joyous songs I'd love to hear,
 At close of day.

Her life should make my life complete;
 My life should make her life more sweet
 Until that time
 When silver tresses in neat fold
 Should lie where now fall locks of gold—
 Perfected rhyme.

And so I sit and dream and dream,
 While past me flows the busy stream
 Of Life and Chance,
 While at my labor every day
 I often gaze across the way,
 And weave romance.

CHRISTMAS MORN.

Wafted to me from Memory Land
 Come musical sounds of chiming bells.
 In the old home church again I stand,
 And list to the tale the preacher tells
 Of Him who came on an olden morn,
 Foredoomed to the Cross and Crown of Thorn—
 Jesus of Nazareth, Saviour, born
 On that holy morning long ago.

I see again the maid of my love,
 And hear her soft, melodious voice
 Chanting praise to the Master above—
 Singing “Peace on earth; oh, men rejoice!”
 My gray-haired sire and mother dear,
 Brothers and sister—all are there;
 Friends I loved with a love so rare
 On that Christmas morning long ago.

The old church now in ruin lies;
 The bells are “jangled and out of tune;”
 And many low-heaped mounds arise
 In the churchyard still—ah, lost too soon.

The shepherd and his flock lie there;
 The gray-haired sire and maiden fair;
 The friends I loved with a love so rare
 On that Christmas morning long ago.

I stand this Christmas morn alone,
 With only dreams to light my way.
 The joys of youth have long since flown;
 I wearily wait the close of day.
 I hear the sound of chiming bells;
 And as the pæan sweetly swells,
 Unto my soul the tale it tells
 Of a Christmas morning long ago.

A SONG.

Arrah, Nora, accushla, your dark eyes bright glancing,
 And your fair, smiling face in its young beauty sweet,
 Set my heart all aglow while I gazed at you dancing;
 Yes, my heart kept time to your swift-tripping feet.
 While the music rang out and the mad crowd grew madder,
 'Twas your voice that I heard in its fairy-like laughter.
 As I listened, accushla, my sad heart grew sadder;
 I knew that sweet voice would haunt me hereafter.

Nora, accushla, I cannot forget thee;
 Thine image shall live whate'er may befall.
 Oft mem'ry shall turn to the night I first met thee—
 That night at the "Carnival Ball."

Ah, Nora, mavourneen, if I dream, do not blame me;
 Sure the bright stars above I can love, but ne'er reach;
 And to dream of your beauty asthore cannot shame me;
 Thy beauty was sent such dreamings to teach.

And now, fare you well—we may meet, you unknowing
 How your presence shall be like a vision of gladness
 Unto him o'er whose life Fate's dark tide is flowing—
 A star beaming bright o'er the Ocean of Sadness.

Nora, accushla, I cannot forget thee ;
 Of Memory's pearls, the rarest of all
 Will be when I dream of the night I first met thee—
 That night at the "Carnival Ball."

TO NELLIE.

I'm waiting here, my love, for thee,
 Beneath the star-lit skies ;
 And oh, my love, I long to see
 The starlight of thine eyes.
 Then come, sweet one ; come forth to me ;
 Why on "The Future" dwell ?
 See lovely night enwraps the world,
 And nobody will tell.

Oh, yes, the moon looks down, I know ;
 But then the moon's so high,
 And folks who gossip never go
 For news up in the sky.
 Why keep me longer waiting here ?
 Why on "To-morrow" dwell ?
 Dian may hear ; Dian may see ;
 But sure she'll never tell.

Fair Dian had her loves, we know,
 While here her course she ran,
 And they were many, too, I trow—
 Orion, Endymion, Pan.

So when she sees us mortals love
 She doth approve it well;
 She smiles upon us when we rove;
 But ah, she'll never tell.

Yes, twinkling stars can see, my love;
 But, then, they cannot speak;
 And folks who sland'rous tales would prove
 Among the stars ne'er seek.
 Then come, my dear; come out to me;
 Yield now to Love's sweet spell;
 The moon and stars may hear and see;
 But ah, they'll never tell.

TO ANNENETTE.

Roses white and red and honeysuckle sweet—
 The gift you sent me, friend—in dying fragrance lies.
 And as their petals fall, pale, faded at my feet,
 Unwonted tears will start, and hide them from mine eyes—
 Hide roses white and red and honeysuckle sweet.

My flowers sweet, ah, me, too soon, too soon, they died.
 In vain I guarded them—vain all my tender care.
 Their fragrance made me dream that you were by my side.
 Ah, see, all dead they lie—my flowers sweet and rare—
 Dead roses white and red and honeysuckle sweet.

And thus, oh, friend of mine, life's story still hath been:
 The flowers Hope hath sent have all too quickly died.
 Love, Friendship, all have gone, and only Sorrow keen
 Hath ever faithful proved,—she lingers at my side—
 Dead roses white and red and honeysuckle sweet.

TO MRS. NARCISSA G.

The spring may come,
 The flowers may bloom,
 And fragrant be the heather;
 But ah, no spring-time comes for me,
 But only wintry weather.
 I dreamt last night of boyhood's days—
 Those days so blithe and merry—
 When first I traversed love's sweet maze
 With dear Narcissa Perry.

Now, we are told
 Youth's love grown old
 Is only love forgotten;
 Like leaves that fall in summer-time,
 Which autumn rains will rotten.
 But ah, this sweet, first love of mine
 Illumes my life so dreary;
 And oft in dreams I rove again
 With sweet Narcissa Perry.

The only thing
 To which I cling
 Of all the days departed
 Is this first love in boyhood won,
 Ere I grew worldly-hearted.
 And tho' on earth we meet no more,
 Deep in my heart I bury
 The mem'ry of my love of yore—
 My dear Narcissa Perry.

SMOKING.

The cigar you gave me, I smoked last night,
 While I sat alone in the fire-light's glow,
 Dreaming sweet dreams in the flickering light,
 While the smoke-wreaths floated to and fro;
 And in the mystical Loom of Dreams
 Some wonderful fabrics the weaver wove—
 Rare flowers, and birds, and limpid streams,
 And the faces fair of the friends I love.

But fairest of all the visions that rose
 On the magical picture fancy wove,
 Was thine own dear self. Ah, me, who knows
 Of a sweeter thing than a dream of love?
 How it soothes the worn and weary soul—
 Such a dream as sin can ne'er evoke;
 Beyond the world, and the world's control,
 Soaring aloft like—my wreaths of smoke.

And so, dear girl, I kept smoking on,
 Giving to fancy a full release;
 I knew the cigar would soon be gone;
 That the morn would come and the visions cease.
 Still that dream in mem'ry long shall live—
 That dream of thee when of love I spoke;
 And I hope, dear girl, that you'll forgive
 The pictures wove in the wreaths of smoke.

AT THE WINDOW.

She stands at the window, looking down
On the passers-by in the crowded street;
The fairest maid in all the town;
To my wearied eyes a goodly treat.
Above her hangs the gilded home
Of a yellow song-bird, singing sweet,
And my thoughts from business idly roam,
And I cease to bear the passing feet.

She does not know while standing there
How brighter to me the time doth seem
When leaving behind me work and care—
With fancies sweet my brain doth teem;
For a bright, sweet face is a certain thing
To drive from my mind all thoughts of gloom,
And I love to hear the song-birds sing,
And roam in dreams where the flowers bloom.

When my voice rings out in discordant cry,
And I say the things that I say by rote,
And to do the work of life I try,
The visions flee and the song-bird's note—
Still I'm better far for the maiden fair,
For the song of the bird and flowers sweet,
And the dreams which bring surcease from care,
And forgetfulness of the passing feet.

A LETTER.

DEAR GLADYS:

The place where I'm dwelling
 Is a place of darkness and gloom ;
 Oft I start at some madman's yelling,
 And fasten the door of my room.
 But 'tis vain, for I still must hear them ;
 Ah, God, the unearthly din ;
 And I am so near, so near them—
 No rest no peace can I win.
 I sit in this hallway of sadness,
 And list to the monotones
 Of an old man stricken with madness,
 And a chill creeps into my bones ;
 For strange are the words he utters
 While in frenzy his brain doth roam ;
 And again and again he mutters—
 "I am going home—going home."
 Here come two forms down the hallway ;
 They sing and chatter and dance ;
 Together I see them alway,
 Unresting, unceasing, they prance.
 As these shapes fantastic pass by me,
 My brain seems, too, to whirl ;
 Ah, God, keep these demons from nigh me—
 (My soul is affrighted, my girl.)
 A shout, a rush, and a scuffle—
 The form of a man laid low ;
 Nothing the nerves to ruffle—
 He is smote by an unseen blow.

As I gaze on his form convulsive,
 My heart with pity is lit;
 Tho' tis certainly strange and repulsive—
 This man lying here in a fit.
 What sound is that in that room there—
 The room that I shudder to pass?
 Nothing; only with hands bare
 It shattered a pane of glass;
 And with blood from its wounds down dripping,
 It shouts in a voice that doth chill—
 “Come to me gently tripping,
 And I'll kill! I'll kill! I'll kill!”
 Now here comes a maniac yelling;
 His face is distorted with rage;
 The veins, congested, are swelling—
 Such a sight was ne'er seen on the stage.
 With an unseen presence he doth battle;
 He grapples and bears it down,
 And tears with his teeth till they rattle,
 While his oaths the air doth drown.
 And these are my comrades, Gladys;
 These are the friends of my soul;
 And this is the place where I wait me
 For the billows of peace to roll.
 Ah, darling, they shall not keep me;
 The truth to you I will tell:
 ‘Twere better at once to steep me
 In the eternal flames of hell.
 My brain seems afired with madness,
 While a chill creeps into my bones;
 And I'm filled with infinite sadness,
 In a black night made blacker with moans.
 But here comes one with a chalice
 Which holdeth a draught for me;

'Twill turn this hell to a palace,
And you my queen shall be.
And while my soul I'm steeping
In this nepenthean draught,
Which bringeth me peaceful sleeping,
I'll dream of the wine I've quaffed—
The wine of my darling's breathing
When our lips with kisses would meet;
My arms her form enwreathing.
Ah, God, such dreams are sweet.
I have drunk, and I lie here dreaming—
Dreaming of nights that are gone;
And the moon's rays o'er me streaming
Seem to bear me up and on.
Up and away from my sorrow
Unto you, dear girl, I fly;
My soul from your own must borrow
Surcease from my woe, or I die.
While you this night are sleeping,
And the angels are guarding your rest,
You may feel a gentle sweeping,
As of dove's wings athwart your breast.
'Twill be but my soul, Gladys,
Seeking an entrance to win.
Then open the window, Gladys,
And let the poor soul in.
And when my soul returneth,
'Twill bring the message, I ween,
For which its owner yearneth—
That Gladys still dreams of Eugene.

A LETTER.

DEAR GLADYS:

The night's softly falling,
 And I sit all alone in my room;
 And mem'ry persists in recalling
 Strange thoughts which oppress me with gloom.
 And I thought if I only could turn me
 To something more pleasant and bright,
 'Twould cool the flame that doth burn me;
 Then a voice said unto me, "Write."
 I have left the ward where you found me,
 And have climbed up another stair;
 And quaint are the scenes which surround me,
 And many antiquities rare;
 For this is a Hall of Storage,
 And is fitted with snow-white shelves;
 The good come from a Before Age,
 Tho' they're cased just like ourselves.
 These bundles which look so human
 While up on their shelves they roll
 You'd almost think each a new man,
 Instead of a worn-out soul.
 These goods are unfolded each morning,
 And placed on the floor erect;
 'Tis not done for the hall's adorning,
 But to keep out the moths, I suspect.
 As I gaze on these strange shapes near me,
 Tott'ring, rotten, and weak,
 I am stilled, for really I fear me
 They'd break if I'd happen to speak.

Silentia, the God of Quiet,
 Seems to hold his court up here,
While below is the Kingdom of Riot—
 The ultimate realm of Fear.
But the line of thoughts I'm pursuing
 Is not altogether best ;
These thoughts have been my undoing ;
 And I must, I must, have rest.
I have heard of the Waters of Resting,
 But know not where they can be ;
All the waters of earth I've been testing
 From mountain unto the sea.
Yes, I've drunk of every fountain
 That's ever been seen or sung ;
Still the waters of Marah will mount when
 I touch the draught with my tongue.
The city spreads out before me,
 And many a distant light
Seems to cast its radiance o'er me
 Thro' the star-gem'd curtain of night.
And the gentle susurrations
 Of yon seaward-flowing stream
Sounds like tintinnabulations
 Of sweet bells which haunt a dream.
Dian, with her silver crescent,
 Doth my chamber all illume
With a soft light phosphorescent,
 While a subtile, sweet perfume
Comes up from the tropic bushes
 That are blooming there below,
While athwart my soul there rushes
 An indefinite faint glow.
There comes on the moon-beam streaming
 Athwart my chamber so bright

The image of whom I am dreaming—
 She comes to me oft in the night.
 And I rise, and fain would clasp her
 To my breast as in days of yore ;
 But 'tis vain ; I never can grasp her ;
 And her voice cries to me, "No more."
 From you for aye I have parted ;
 It needeth no words to tell
 That this love which so strangely started
 Was only a glamorous spell.
 Still oft when you stand by some lover,
 And list to his bab'ling tongue,
 Your thoughts will turn to another,
 And you'll think of the dreamer who sung.

A LETTER.

DEAR GLADYS :

Have I dreamed ? Am I now awaking ?
 What shadows are these which steal ?
 No foot-fall the silence is breaking—
 All shadowy, misty, unreal.
 Ah, strange and delusive fancies
 Sweep thro' my brain to-night,
 And ever and anon there dances
 Before me a vision to blight.
 I wonder what change hath come o'er me ?
 Where am I ? Ah, now let me see.
 'Tis true, 'tis true, here before me
 Is the place where the maniacs be.
 I have passed thro' a stage of the journey
 Which I know, but never can tell.

I have fought in a lurid tourney
 With the fiendish knights of hell.
 I have lived in a realm of Vision ;
 'Twas peopled with spirits unfair,
 Who mocked at my woe in derision,
 And turned all my thoughts to despair.
 'Tis over ; the hosts are dispersing ;
 They are fading away from my view ;
 And I sit here calmly rehearsing
 My vagrant thoughts unto you.
 Since I wrote unto you my last letter
 The fiend who doth own me hath come ;
 And my soul he did closely fetter
 In the strong bonds woven by Doom.
 And I died to the world and the living
 While my soul from his dwelling did roam ;
 And his home to the fiends I've been giving,
 But my soul hath returned to his home.
 The ward where at present I'm dwelling
 Hath horrors I never shall tell ;
 'Tis a place where I hear but the knelling
 Of a ceaseless funeral bell.
 'Tis here Hope dieth forever ;
 'Tis here Joy never doth come ;
 Here life from the living they sever,
 All clothed in the garments of gloom.
 Just list the maniacal yelling
 In the corridor there below,
 And see that lunatic telling
 To a shadow his story of woe.
 Here cometh one slyly creeping,
 With his hands outstretched before ;
 And he suddenly starteth to weeping,
 For he seeth invisible gore.

'Tis said one night on returning
Where his bride was wrapped in sleep,
With a feverish thirst in him burning,
 He unto her side did creep.
Her form in all its sweet beauty
 Before him in innocence lies ;
Unto him she had yielded all duty ;
 No shame ever rose to her eyes.
But the jealous spirit was in him,
 And bade him to slay her there ;
And that fiend to its work did win him—
 She was dead in her beauty fair.
Dead unto all who loved her,
 But to him more alive than life ;—
In the night when from life he removed her
 He bound her more closely his wife.
Here is one with the blood of a brother ;
 Here is one with the blood of his child ;—
Each cruel, each black as the other ;
 Each driven by memory wild.
God send them a time of forgetting—
 A time of surcease from pain.
Oh, lift up the pall of regretting,
 And send to them hope once again.
Ah, Gladys, I am sad with their sorrow ;
 All my soul is dark with their woe ;
And I pray for some coming to-morrow,
 When a peace-wave shall over them flow.

ADRIFT.

Is it the ebb, or is it the flood?
Does the tide flow out, or in?
Is the white-topped wave a signal of good,
And the undertow, of sin?
I float on the tide I know not where;
There are shores on either hand.
One side is the realm of dark Despair,
The other is Hope's fair land.

If the tide flows in, the channel lies
On the side which drifts to Hope;
If the tide flows out, I must close my eyes
In the dark land, there to grope.
The tide must leave me some place, I know,
For the channel's depth grows less;
Yet I know not now which way I go—
To grief or to happiness.

Is there one in the world who cares for him
Who drifts on the tide alone?
Is there one in the world whose eyes will dim
If unto Despair he's blown?
I wait, while the waves dash on the beach;
I list for a signal call;
I wait for the flash of an arm to reach,
And save from what may befall.

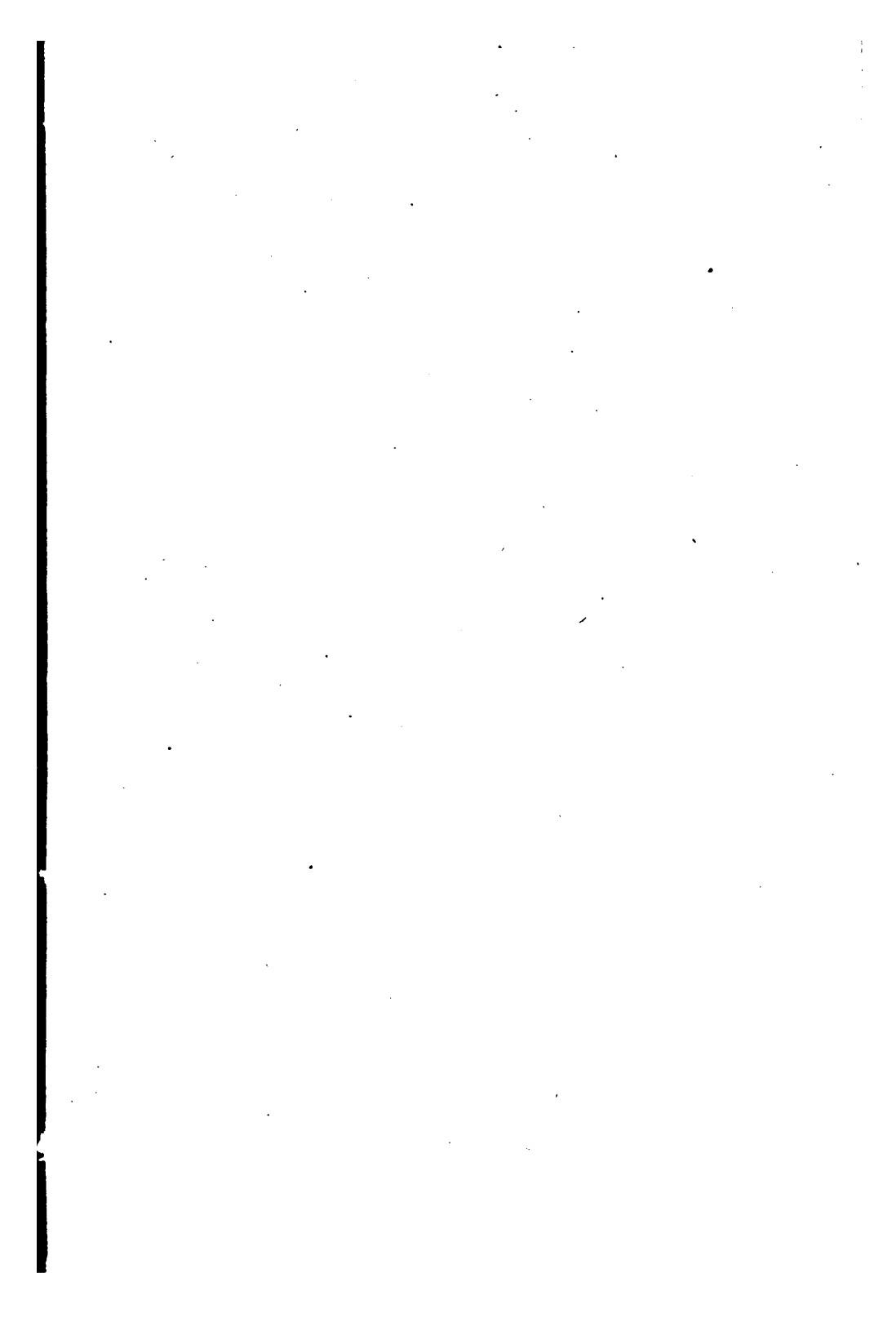
RONDEL.

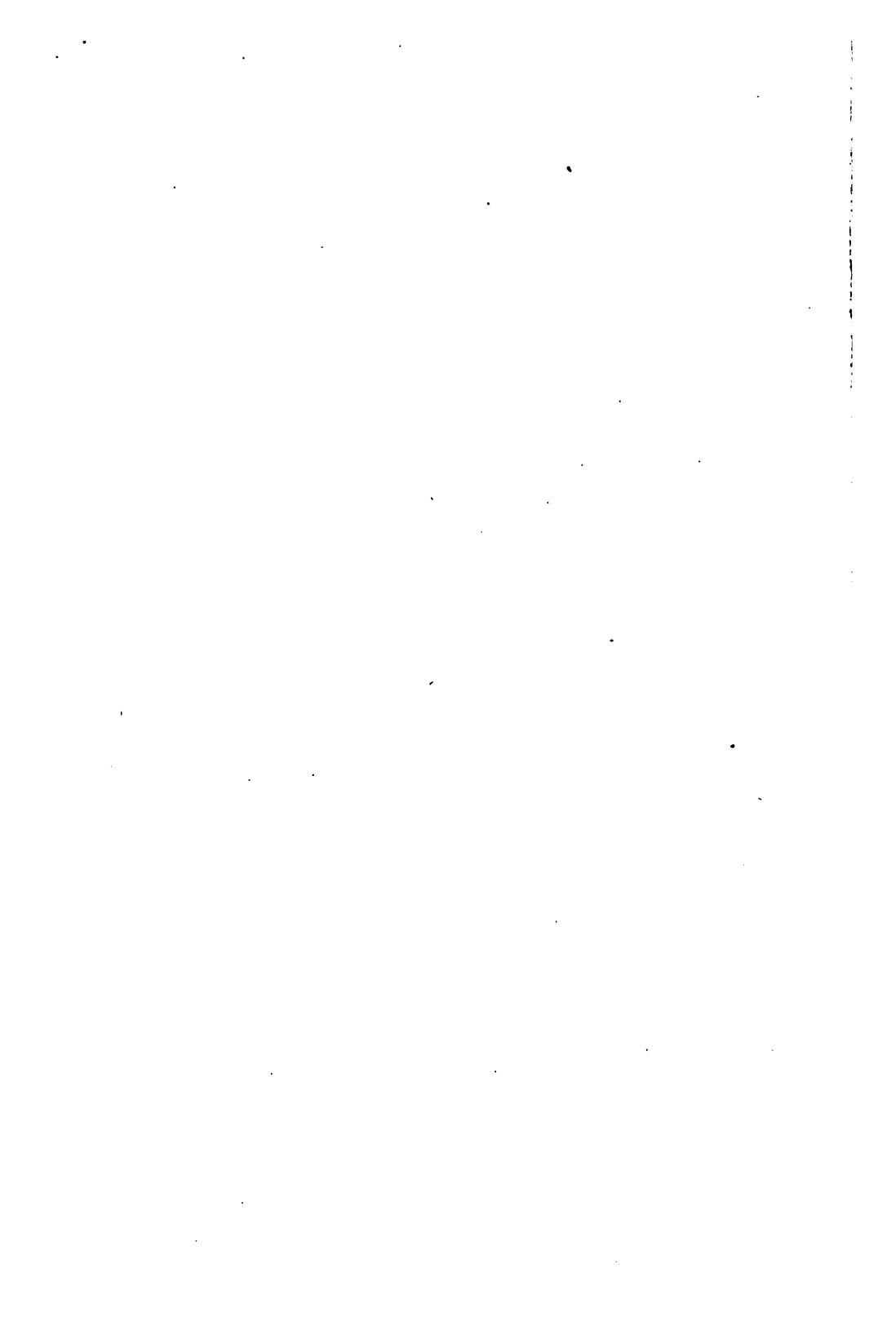
Writing my rhymes, I have had visions sweet—
 Women I've loved have sat them at my feet,
 With lily faces turned up to mine own,
 And large, soft eyes, like velvet pansies blown ;
 And I have stooped to kiss them many times—
 Writing my rhymes.

Truth is no truer than my dreams to me—
 Sweeter than truth they ever seem to be.
 I close mine eyes, so heavy grown with pain ;
 And then these visions come to me again
 With kisses on mine eyes and love's sweet chimes—
 Writing my rhymes.

Go forth, my rhymes, unto the living sweet.
 Take kisses, rhymes, and fair, strange faces greet.
 Kiss them as friends. Oh, make new friends for me,
 That they dead places fill again thro' ye.
 Still pleasures sweet I've had in past dead times—
 Writing my rhymes.

Wm









MAR 10 1949

